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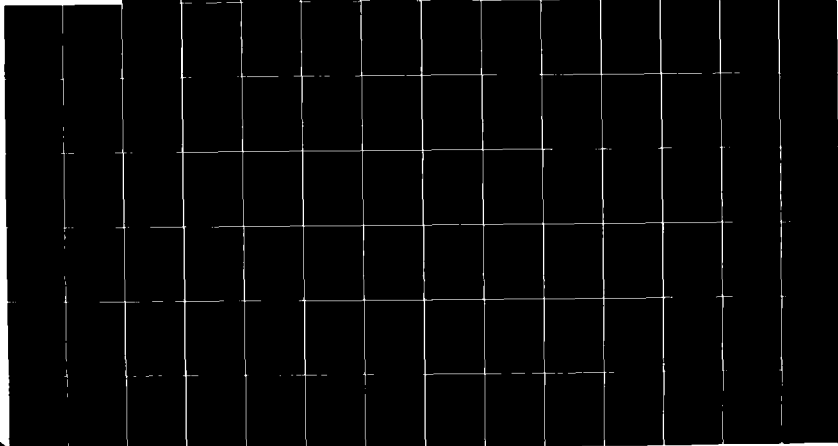
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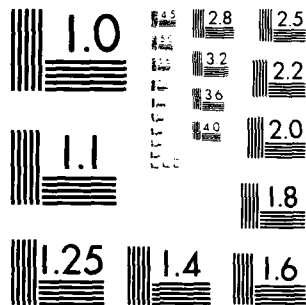
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The Warrior Heritage: A Study of Rhodesia

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20. stand against some four thousand Ndebele tribesmen. The fight was so bitter that the Ndebele lost heart for further combat and surrendered immediately thereafter. A rebellion by two tribes in 1896 was put down; and, in so doing, Rhodesians left a heritage of intangibles, such as courage, and tangibles, such as proper use of forts. World Wars I and II saw sacrifice by Rhodesians that, on a per capita basis, exceeded the sacrifice of any other nation in the free world.

In the current anti-terrorist war, Rhodesians are, in some cases, making good use of their heritage. Yet in other areas, like the use of forts, they seem to have learned nothing from their mistakes and eventual success in the 1896 Rebellions. Their warrior heritage, though a great thing, is not sufficient alone.

RICE UNIVERSITY

THE WARRIOR HERITAGE  
A STUDY OF RHODESIA

by

ARTHUR B. ALPHIN

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## ABSTRACT

A warrior is a person who adheres to values which inspire in him a willingness to engage in certain activities regardless of risk to his life. In battle such people accomplish great things. The heritage they leave to others is frequently said to be an advantage when a nation is embroiled in military troubles.

Rhodesia is a nation in trouble and they have such a heritage. In 1893 Major Allan Wilson and thirty-three men died in a last stand against some four thousand Ndebele tribesmen. The fight was so bitter that the Ndebele lost heart for further combat and surrendered immediately thereafter. A rebellion by two tribes in 1896 was put down; and, in so doing, Rhodesians left a heritage of intangibles, such as courage, and tangibles, such as proper use of forts. World Wars I and II saw sacrifice by Rhodesians that, on a per capita basis, exceeded the sacrifice of any other nation in the free world.

In the current anti-terrorist war, Rhodesians are, in some cases, making good use of their heritage. Yet in other areas, like the use of forts, they seem to have learned nothing from their mistakes and eventual success

in the 1896 Rebellions. Their heritage of courage from Major Wilson and from their efforts in World Wars I and II seems to inspire no one as they lose hope and shun sacrifice in a brutal and lonely war.

Rhodesia is beset by a tide of trouble that is so great and so lacking in other favorable factors that they cannot seem to win. Their warrior heritage, though a great thing, is not sufficient alone.

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## CHAPTER I

### "I HAVE NOT YET BEGUN..."

Military history reveals many soul-stirring moments. One reads of King Leonidas and his Spartans standing to the last man at Thermopylae; of Hannibal bringing his army over the Alps; of Nelson leading the melee at Trafalgar. Americans, though possessed of a relatively young nation, are no less apt to emphasize the heroic. John Paul Jones, who had not yet begun to fight, was quickly enshrined forever; while Lloyd Bucher, who had not yet learned to do so, was just as quickly relegated to the dustbin of history. Every American boy has heard of and venerates men like William Travis, who vowed never to surrender or retreat from the Alamo, and Anthony MacAuliffe, who told the Germans "nuts" when they knocked upon the gates of Bastogne.

Stern stuff from stern men, but if one thinks a bit and plots things on a map a pattern emerges. All of the foregoing incidents are from the history of the "western" world. One wonders what else has happened on this planet. Surely the large areas on our map that do not boast of such glorious and glittering moments have felt the tread of armies. What great engagements did the

earth and skies witness there? Major western survey works reveal little. However, trips to these non-western areas indicate that there have been many glorious moments in military history of which "westerners" know little. In Rhodesia and South Africa, one finds that many people possess a distinct awareness of history.

Picture, if you will, a small clearing in a mopani scrub forest. It is a dismal, overcast, drizzly morning and everything is wet. In the center of the clearing is the remains of a patrol, thirty-four men in all, surrounded by the enemy. The patrol, outnumbered literally a hundred to one, had arranged their horses in a circle, slain them and taken cover behind the carcasses. For some three hours they have employed their breechloading rifles and a few assorted handguns to hold their enemies at bay. That part of the clearing not occupied by the patrol is littered with the bodies of the enemy while in the edges of the clearing and back into the scrub can be seen the flitting forms of living enemies preparing for another assault. The air is foul with the stench and smoke of black powder, for even the enemy possesses some fifteen hundred firearms. Ears are deafened from the constant din of the shooting and screaming and war chants. Hope long ago left those of the Patrol who still live as they look at their pitifully small and rapidly dwindling supply of cartridges,

and at the bodies of their dead comrades. Reinforcements were to be brought by the scout and his trusty companion, but no such force has arrived and there is no guarantee that the scout got through.

From the forest come the shouts of the indunas and the answering chants of their men. The air is split by the thunder of the thousands of assegais<sup>1</sup> being pounded on shields. The earth fairly quakes from the drumming of thousands of feet upon the ground as the black masses emerge from the forest. Dressed in their oxtails and carrying their oxhide shields and stabbing assegais the natives surge forward for they know that this is to be the final assault, that this time they will disembowel the patrol, blood their assegais and release the spirits of their enemies.

With a tightness in their belly and with a sinking heart, the members of the patrol look to their leader. They too know that this is the last assault. There are too few defenders left alive and too few cartridges remaining, yet resolve still shows in the eye of the leader. He is not yet defeated, he will go like a soldier and not like a coward. He barks out his final orders and firing sputters to a halt as each man loads his last cartridge and waits. The black masses are nearer now, their assegais trace wild circles in the skies, their shrieks and war cries seem to rebound off

the clouds. Frenzy shows in their faces and foam flecks their lips as the black hordes draw nigh. They seem as a great, inexorable black wave, coming with the power of a typhoon to obliterate the sand castle before them. And then, seconds before impact and certain death, the patrol rises to its feet and, standing shoulder to shoulder, the men shout their last defiance at their enemies. They sing "God Save the Queen" as their lives are washed away.

Sounds almost corny, this legend of Allan Wilson and his Shangani Patrol. But just try to scoff at Wilson when a Rhodesian is within earshot and see how fast a challenge arises. The legend of Wilson runs strong in Rhodesia, it is nurtured and it is believed. Wilson is set aside as a man to be venerated and emulated. In a nation of frontier and wilderness, it is noteworthy that there is not one but three great monuments dedicated solely to the Patrol. Streets in every town are named after Wilson and some of his ill-fated men. History books and a grateful nation should treat Travis or Jones so well!

Many people, including most Rhodesians, refer to incidents such as Wilson's Shangani Patrol as being part of a warrior heritage. But what is a warrior heritage? Webster defines a warrior as "a man engaged or experienced in warfare and esp. [sic] in primitive warfare or the

close combat typical of ancient or medieval times." If a warrior heritage is a heritage of such men, Leonidas surely fits but John Paul Jones strains the definition, while Allan Wilson ruptures it completely. Neither Wilson nor any of those thirty-three men who died with him had any military experience or exposure prior to the war and campaign in which they perished.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps there is something else to being a warrior if the legend of Allan Wilson has its place in the warrior heritage. Webster carries the definition further and says that in broad terms a warrior is "a person of demonstrated courage, fortitude, zeal or pugnacity." By these criteria, a warrior could be defined as a person who adheres to values, or a system of values, which inspire in him a willingness to engage in certain activities regardless of risk to his life.

To say, in light of the above, that a warrior is a suicidal maniac would be a gross exaggeration. Placing this in perspective, assume that the set or group of persons called warriors is finite and that its membership continually changes. Further, portions of this membership overlap with membership in the group called soldiers and portions of it do not. If the boundary around warriors is porous, which it must be if the membership changes, then anyone, soldier and non-soldier alike, is capable of crossing over and

becoming a warrior.

Every warrior worries about his end and how he will be remembered by his fellowman, for that is one of the few things that really motivates him to carry forward with a dangerous task that may well result in his messy and untimely demise. In the innermost recesses of his mind, every warrior envies such a death as Wilson's. He does not fear death, for that he has already resigned himself to. In his poem "I Have a Rendezvous with Death..." Alan Seeger wrote:

God knows 'twere better to be deep  
Pillowed in silk and scented down,  
Where Love throbs out in blissful sleep,  
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,  
Where hushed awakenings are dear...  
But I've a rendezvous with Death  
At midnight in some flaming town,  
When Spring trips north again this year,  
And I to my pledged word am true,  
I shall not fail that rendezvous.<sup>3</sup>

He has accepted the inevitability of his death. A letter to his mother, written in June 1915 carries this a bit further. He says:

You must not be anxious about my not coming back. The chances are about ten to one that I will. But if I should not, you must be proud, like a Spartan mother, and feel that it is your contribution to the triumph of the cause whose righteousness you feel so keenly.... Death is nothing terrible after all. It may mean something even more wonderful than life. It cannot possibly mean anything worse to the good soldier.<sup>4</sup>

As Alan Seeger intimates, what a soldier really fears is the manner of his death, for he does not want his life,

or more properly, the sacrifice of his life, to be wasted, cheapened, sullied or tarnished. George S. Patton, son of the famed Patton of World War II, and a highly decorated soldier and warrior in his own right, acknowledged this with his now famous line, "Well, you could always be shot by a nigger pimp in a whorehouse in New Orleans."<sup>5</sup>

If all this is so, the perhaps the warrior heritage refers to a system of values of such quality that at some point people have a higher regard for the value system than for life itself. In the mainstream of people possessing such a heritage many have passed that point at one time or another.

As this is written, traumatic events are unfolding in Rhodesia. This nation is beset by the tide around it, struggling to maintain itself against its enemies. These enemies, while presenting a very formidable external threat, are also scattered throughout the country and present a continuous and all-pervasive threat within Rhodesia. Such a nation is ideal for study. The nature of the war there is such that all people, soldier and non-soldier alike, are given ample opportunity to think about their system of values and the price of their life. Do the people of Rhodesia possess a warrior heritage? If so, is the heritage of any use to them?

## CHAPTER I

### Endnotes

1. For pronunciation and definition of this and other words, see Appendix 1, Pronunciation Guide.
2. Robert Cary, A Time to Die (Capetown: Howard Timmins, 1968), pp. 169-171; B 4/2/4 Victoria Defense Force Attestation Roll.
3. Alan Seeger, Poems, with an introduction by William Archer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons: 1919), p. 144.
4. Ibid., p. xxxv.
5. Spoken in support of the author when the latter was criticized for recklessness in rescuing a girl from a burning automobile. Highway 36, approximately eleven miles south of Rogers, Texas, 24 October 1976.

## CHAPTER II

### BRAVE MEN

Rhodesia's history does not start in Rhodesia or with Rhodesians but in what is now Natal, (see Figure 1) with a group of people who came to be known as Zulus. At the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, three tribes in this area--the Mthethwe, the Ndwandwe, and the Zulu--were carrying on a life style consisting in large measure of inter-tribal murder and robbery. In addition to the struggles among the tribes, all three tribes were involved in periodic dynastic quarrels that centered about their respective kings. One such struggle had resulted in the death of a Zulu king and the exile of his son, Shaka, to the neighboring Mthethwe tribe. Much as Phillip II of Macedon was befriended by Epaminondas of Thebes, so was Shaka befriended. Shaka developed into a sturdy young man with an aggressive nature. As he became trusted and given command of soldiers, he developed a few novel ideas. First, he scorned the throwing assegai (a light throwing spear with a narrow, leaf-shaped blade) and instead developed the iklwa, or stabbing assegai. This assegai had a longer, wider and sturdier, but still leaf-shaped, blade and a short handle. In comparative

effect, the stabbing assegai was very much like the Roman gladius. To complement the new assegai Shaka made the shield smaller but sturdier, and went barefoot for sure footing (see Figures 2, 3 and 4). In combat his technique was to close rapidly upon the enemy, batter the enemy's shield with his own shield and, by shoving, create an opening, generally on the left side of the enemy's rib cage. A right hand sidearm motion with the assegai then neatly dispatched the enemy.<sup>1</sup>

Introduction of this weapon, the shield and the tactic set Shaka off on a meteoric rise. He rapidly subdued the Ndwandwe and the Zulu, killing their kings (Zwide and Matshobane) and amalgamating his forces with the defeated. The manner of this amalgamation was simple. He would surround an enemy tribe's kraal (combination cattle enclosure and human living spaces), usually before dawn, set fire to everything and kill whatever managed to escape the conflagration. Of course, the cattle, most young girls, and a few boys of military training age were kept for the amalgamation. The killing of Matshobane netted Shaka the person of Mzilikazi, son of Matshobane, when the tribe was overrun.<sup>2</sup>

Mzilikazi was befriended in turn by Shaka and, by 1817, had attained command of the Bulawayo kraal and the regiment headquartered therein. After a successful raid Mzilikazi refused to send the captured cattle to

Shaka, even though under Zulu law and custom they were Shaka's due. Shaka sent an impi (group of regiments) to punish Mzilikazi, who fled westwards over the Drakensburg mountains. Arriving in what is now the Transvaal, Mzilikazi found a partial power vacuum and stepped in. He completed this move by destroying every other living human in the Transvaal between then and 1836. During this time (1831) a Rev. Moffat arrived, harboring the sincere hope that he could "civilize" Mzilikazi. This obviously did not occur, but a friendship developed between Moffat and Mzilikazi that exposed the latter and his tribe (now named the Ndebele) to white men.<sup>3</sup>

By 1836 the Voortrekkers were beginning to appear in the Transvaal. These people traveled in independent family groups of a few wagons and ten to thirty persons. In August three of these parties or family groups were present on the plains near the Vaal river; the Erasmus party, the Liebenburg family and the Botha family. In the late afternoon of 17 August Mzilikazi attacked. First to fall was the Erasmus party, but Stephen Erasmus, returning late from a hunt, saw his party being cut up and rode to warn the Liebenburgs. These people refused to believe Erasmus who then rode hard towards the Botha party, barely escaping the Ndebele who set upon and destroyed the Liebenburgs. Botha took heed, formed a

mini-laager (African equivalent of "circle wagons") and fought off the Ndebele under the feeble light of a half moon.<sup>4</sup> Within a few days H. Poitgeiter, a trek leader, arrived and set about making a stronger defense at a place called Vechtkop. This was attacked by the Ndebele on 15 October without detriment to the whites save loss of their cattle herd by rustling.<sup>5</sup>

Arrival of another trek leader, Gert Maritz, and more trekkers brought strength up to a level such that a counterstroke could be planned. Maritz' counterblow fell on 17 January 1837 at the Mosega kraal and resulted in the destruction of the kraal and the loss by the Ndebele of numerous cattle. In August 1837 the Zulus under Dingane came over the Drakensburg to attack the Ndebele in revenge for the initial betrayal of Shaka, Dingane's father. During the period 4 to 13 November 1837, a strong party of trekkers came back and in a slashing and brutal raid slew over 3,000 Ndebele and counter-rustled some 50,000 head of cattle, oxen, sheep and goats. Reeling under these multiple blows, Mzilikazi split the Ndebele into two groups and headed for the country north of the Limpopo River (what is now Rhodesia) where he reunited his tribe in 1839.<sup>6</sup>

On the north side of the Limpopo Mzilikazi found a group of tribes known as the Rozwi peoples. They had created an empire based at Monomatapa in 1335 and,

though their empire was no longer vibrant, they were a peace loving people who traded with the Portuguese coming up from Mozambique.<sup>7</sup> Mzilikazi put an end to the peace and the Rozwi. The Ndebele fell upon the Rozwi and plied their Zulu stabbing assegais with a will. Over the next few years they engaged in an orgy of killing and destruction that absolutely depopulated the southwestern half of what is now Rhodesia.<sup>8</sup>

Given people with such a violent nature as the Ndebele, driven to a frenzy by attacks from trekkers and Zulus, and then released in a land of peaceful people with no outside interference, the violent and warlike Ndebele developed a taste for savagery and excess that stuns the "civilized" mind. They were as cruel to each other as they were to their enemies. For example, one night at a celebration, two inebriated celebrants took a few sips of beer from a pot intended for the king. These unfortunates became a party game in which they were severely beaten and their noses, lips, and ears cut off. On another occasion a boy threw a rock at a cow, blinding it on one side. Since all cattle were considered property of the king, both the boy's eyeballs were plucked out. The person of the king was sacred and his will absolute. He could, and almost daily did, have people who displeased him put to death on the spot.<sup>9</sup>

Military expeditions were haphazardly planned but were no less cruel. At least once, and sometimes up to three times per year, a great military dance would be held at the king's kraal. After the warriors had danced themselves to a frenzy, they would rush to surround the king who would throw an assegai in some direction. With that direction as a guide, the warriors would march as far as they could, kill everything they could, rustle all the cattle they could, and then return to their king's kraal. Since the Zulu custom of requiring a man to kill enemies and prove himself brave before he could break a military induction vow of celibacy was retained, there was a built-in "war hawk" faction. Since all raids went out against either helpless or peaceful people, however, the concept of bravery was warped into a game of who could kill the most people in the cruelest manner possible. Graphic descriptions of how far this was taken serve only to sicken the reader.<sup>10</sup> Frederick C. Selous, who traveled throughout Rhodesia from 1870 to 1888, leaves the following word picture:

Some 50 years ago this fine country must have been thickly inhabited, as almost every valley has, at one time or another, been under cultivation. The sites of villages are also very numerous, the peaceful people inhabiting this part of Africa must then have been in the zenith of their prosperity. About 1840 however, the Matabili Zulus, under their warlike chief, Umziligazi, settled in the country which they

now inhabit, and very soon bands of these ferocious and bloodthirsty savages overran the peaceful vales of the Mashona country in every direction. The poor Mashonas, unskilled in war, fell an easy prey before the fierce invaders and very soon every stream in their country ran red with their blood, whilst vultures and hyaenas feasted undisturbed amidst the ruins of their devastated homes. Their cattle, sheep and goats were driven off by their conquerors, and their children, when old enough to walk and not above ten or twelve years of age, were taken for slaves; the little children too young to walk were, of course killed together with their mothers. In a very few years there were no more Mashonas left in the open country, the remnant that had escaped massacre having fled into the mountainous districts to the south and east of their former dwellings, where they still live. Thus, in a short time an immense extent of fertile country, that had, perhaps, for ages past supported a large and thriving community, was again given back to nature: and so it remains to the present day--an utterly uninhabited country.<sup>11</sup>

As this slaughter went on year after year, the original tribes of the area, the Kakanga, Batonga, Makaranga, Mangove and so forth were all displaced. The Batonga were driven into the Zambesi Valley where the tse tse fly ruled supreme and prevented introduction of cattle. The Batonga settled there despite the fly because the lack of cattle gave them some immunity from Ndebele raids. The other tribes were driven eastwards where they were continually hounded and compacted until tribal distinctions among them began to disappear. Called "Maholi" (slave people) or "Mashona" (the dirty ones) by the Ndebele, the latter name eventually stuck

as a name for the new, amalgamated tribe.<sup>12</sup>

While all this was in progress, Rev. Robert Moffat stayed with Mzilikazi and continued his attempts to civilize the Ndebele. Though he never succeeded, his presence exposed the Ndebele to the white influence and Lobengula, Mzilikazi's son and successor, had a continual cluster of three or four whites around his "court." One can imagine what sort of men these whites were in order to survive in the Ndebele atmosphere.<sup>13</sup> Among them was Johannes Wilhelm Colenbrander, an incredibly cold-hearted man. He engaged in illegal gun running to the Ndebele in exchange for ivory and gold. Apparently, he also encouraged the king to preserve the status quo.<sup>14</sup> Missionaries tried to civilize Lobengula when he was king but though Lobengula listened there was no visible effect. Most of them left regarding the Ndebele as "cruel and ruled by force."<sup>15</sup>

With the coming and going of Colenbrander, Selous and a few other whites, word eventually spread that there was gold in the area north of the Limpopo. Pressures rapidly built up on all sides. Portugal, the Transvaal, Britain and Germany sent envoys to Lobengula at Bulawayo, all trying to get Lobengula to sign a friendship treaty or to agree to anything. British influence with Khama, King of the Bechuana had led to the Bechuanaland Protectorate (now Botswana) and this cut the Germans in

South-West Africa and Rhodesia. The Portuguese were rumored to be pushing up the Pungwe and Zambesi rivers into the Mashona area from Mozambique. Britain wanted to fill the void on the map between Angola, Bechuanaland, Transvaal and Mozambique, not only for the value of the minerals (gold) there, but also to strengthen her position on the key strategic ground to control the Cape shipping routes to India. On 11 February 1888 Lobengula signed a Friendship Treaty with the British. Lord Salisbury, the British Prime Minister, wanted still closer ties but felt that he did not have the support of the electorate in Britain.<sup>16</sup>

In 1888 Mr. Cecil Rhodes, an energetic Briton and majority shareholder in the De Beers Diamond Mining Company, sent three representatives to Lobengula: Charles Rudd, R. Maguire, and "Matabele" Thompson. After much personally dangerous negotiation and a good bit of perfidy, they persuaded Lobengula to sign a concession to Rhodes of all mineral rights in Mashonaland and the power to mine them. In exchange Rhodes promised Lobengula 100 pounds sterling per month, 1,000 Martini-Henry rifles (see Figure 5), 100,000 rounds of ammunition for the same and a gunboat on the Zambesi River.<sup>17</sup> Before continuing, it is interesting to note that Lobengula attempted statecraft and diplomacy on an equal basis with the whites but in so doing he lost the absolute loyalty

of his subjects. Peaceful negotiation was viewed by his people as weakness and rumors quickly circulated that he had lost his courage. From that point onwards a growing segment of Ndebele considered Lobengula to be a cuckold (a severe insult when directed to the king, as distinct from the actual meaning) and a coward. His attempts to prove his courage were vacillating affairs in which he normally wound up killing whatever counselor was advising action contrary to what Lobengula thought the people wanted him to do. This only served to further isolate him in his kingship.<sup>18</sup>

With the Concession in hand, Rhodes set about the tasks of paying Lobengula so as to cement the Concession, and gathering the money and supplies to exploit it. Meanwhile two Englishmen, Lord Gifford and E. Cawston sent one Edward Maundy to Lobengula to gain a rival concession at the same time that they applied to the British government for a royal charter. Thompson (who was being used by Rhodes to keep Lobengula happy) barely kept his head, and the peace, in Bulawayo. Rhodes bought out Gifford and Cawston, applied for the charter himself, secured it in July 1889 and founded the British South Africa Company (BSAC) to execute the Charter. Thus armed with quite literally all governmental powers in the areas of what is now Rhodesia and Zambia, Rhodes hurried back to Africa.<sup>19</sup>

On arrival at the Cape, Rhodes was quickly warned of a rumored Boer trek to Mashonaland.<sup>20</sup> Responding with vigor, he organized and equipped a Pioneer Column of settlers guarded by the British South Africa Company Police, in reality a light cavalry regiment. These forces marshalled at Ft. Matlaputla near the Macloutsie River. In July 1890 they crossed over into Matabeleland, traversed it, established Fort Victoria just inside the proposed Matabeleland-Mashonaland "border" (see Figure 6) and then moved north establishing the city of Salisbury. In 1891 Dr. Leander Starr Jameson was named by Rhodes to be the administrator of the new country.<sup>21</sup>

Dr. Jameson immediately set about his job, a large portion of which was dealing with external threats. The first was the threat of invasion from the Portuguese. A group of Portuguese invaded Mashonaland and set up operations in Matusa's kraal in November 1890. Major P.W. Forbes,<sup>22</sup> second in command of the BSAC Police, marched on the Portuguese, arrested them and invaded Mozambique with an "army" of eight men. He was one day away from seizing Beira when he was recalled on 29 November 1890. The Portuguese followed slowly, re-encroached on Mashona territory and built a fort near Massi Kessi. On assuming duties as administrator, Jameson resolved to end the problem. He dispatched

Captain H.M. Heyman with 52 men to Massi Kessi. They fortified a hill and lured the Portuguese into attacking. The attack came on 11 May 1891 and was repulsed with severe loss to the attacker due to accurate, long range defensive rifle fire. On 12 May Heyman occupied, looted and burned the Portuguese fort. The remaining Portuguese retreated pell mell towards Beira. Owing to a lack of medicine and supplies, the majority of them failed to survive the retreat.<sup>23</sup>

With the Portuguese threat thus nullified, Jameson set about trying to keep peace with Lobengula. First he established a border along the rivers Tokwe-Shashi-Sebakwe-Umniati-Umfuli and endeavored to restrain white prospectors from crossing it and going on to Ndebele land.<sup>24</sup> Jameson expected Lobengula to do likewise on his side, yet this was not done as the Ndebele regarded it as their right to kill their own "Maholis" and nothing was going to stop them. Though Lobengula did try on a few occasions to control his people, his grip was not complete and raids continued.<sup>25</sup> These raids took on the same general pattern. A Ndebele regiment would swoop down on some Mashona kraal; kill the inhabitants, rape and loot a little, burn the kraal and rustle the livestock. Those Mashonas who managed to escape into the bush or into the rocks of a kopje were generally left unmolested so they could return and re-populate

the area for the next season's sport.<sup>26</sup>

Needless to say this was upsetting to the whites in Mashonaland even though none of them was killed. To be sure, the whites despised the Mashona as a cowardly race for putting up with the Ndebele hunting seasons, and Mashonas were not highly regarded as workers. As Jameson said, "One Matabele does as much work as half a dozen of these miserable Mashonas."<sup>27</sup> However, the Mashona were the best labor that the whites could get and they were trying to make do. Ndebele raids severely disrupted the labor pool. A spark of resentment began to glow when, in November of 1891, a Ndebele party sacked and burned Lomangundi's kraal located seventy miles north of Salisbury. The Ndebele took seventy slaves and five hundred cattle, killing most of the rest of the Mashona as they had not run to the kopje's, mistakenly thinking that the whites had displaced the Ndebeles, "owned" them (the Mashona) and would defend them. Protests from Jameson drew quibbling responses from Lobengula.<sup>28</sup>

Throughout 1892 incidents of wire stealing, brigandage on the Ft. Victoria-Salisbury road, cattle rustling and killing were rife. Towards the end of 1892 Lobengula built some military kraals near the Mashonaland border and incidents increased. Jameson attempted to calm the situation but could neither defuse the growing

white resentment nor bring Lobengula under control. Due to the political situation in Britain, Jameson did not want a war with the Ndebele. At best the BSAC would come under severe criticism for "mistreating" natives and at worst they would have to call in Imperial troops and perhaps lose the company altogether. Try as he might, however, Jameson lost his grip on the situation. The Mashona demanded protection from their new masters in exchange for work, yet this very idea further alienated Lobengula, who resented the white interference, for it undermined his authority and brought into question his "right" to raid and kill at will. As an indicator of feelings, a Mashona chief who claimed white protection was brought to Bulawayo where, at Lobengula's order, he was flayed alive.<sup>29</sup>

White bitterness increased and whites rapidly became polarized against the Ndebele. People came to believe that the only possible solution was the use of force against the Ndebele.<sup>30</sup> The spark became an open flame in May 1893 when a Mashona chief, Gomalla, stole some wire from the British South Africa Company. A fine was levied and Gomalla paid it in cattle that belonged to Lobengula. An impi was sent to punish Gomalla but on 12 June 1893, Captain Lendy and a small force of men from Ft. Victoria persuaded the impi to turn back. In July 1893 a much larger impi returned to the Ft. Victoria

area and virtually laid siege to the town. Though no whites were killed, this impi started its work on the Mashona on 9 July and by the 10th the district was literally in flames. Ndebeles appeared at the gates of Ft. Victoria demanding that all Mashona be surrendered. As a concession to the whites, the Ndebele said that they would kill the Mashona out of sight of the whites and in such a place that the blood wouldn't foul water holes. Whites in the town refused to give up the Mashonas who had taken refuge there. The Ndebeles then proceeded to criss-cross the entire area, slaughtering every Mashona they could find. In the case of one Mr. Richmond, a prospector on his way to Ft. Victoria, his Mashona boy, who was initially leading a mule and then hiding behind Mr. Richmond, was pulled away and assegaied on the spot by the Ndebeles. Further, one Ndebele told Mr. Richmond "keep quiet, we have been ordered not to kill a white man now but your day is coming."<sup>31</sup>

Residents of Ft. Victoria seethed with anger, and comments like "Savages do not understand leniency; they take it for fear and at once take advantage of it,"<sup>32</sup> were frequently heard. Jameson was summoned and he arrived in Ft. Victoria on 14 July. By this time the main regiments of the impi, those led by Manyu and Mjaan, had withdrawn. Jameson treated with Umgandaan, the remaining Ndebele regimental leader and got insulted

for his efforts. From this point onwards Jameson's militancy began to bud. He wired Major P.W. Forbes in Salisbury, telling him that the Ndebele must be attacked in order to save the BSAC investment in Mashonaland.<sup>33</sup> Forbes made preparations for war. Telegrams flashed back and forth between Jameson and Rhodes (in South Africa), whose final telegram was interpreted by Jameson to mean act if you are convinced it is right. The telegram read "Read Luke XIV, 31."<sup>34</sup>--The verse reads:

Or what king going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?<sup>35</sup>

On 19 July Jameson met again with some young indunas (leaders) of nearby Ndebele forces, giving them a three hour ultimatum to be across the border into Matabeleland. One hour later Jameson sent Captain Lendy and twelve mounted riflemen after the Ndebele. Lendy caught up with the Ndebele near Mazabili's kraal and opened fire on them, propelling them in headlong flight towards the border. Jameson took Lendy's report of the action at face value, reported it to Rhodes, and, apparently now aware of the value of citizens as fighters, prepared to fight a war without Imperial help.<sup>36</sup>

There is some doubt as to whether Lendy was

justified in opening fire and whether he had allowed the full time limit to expire. Henry Loch, the British High Commissioner for South Africa, cabled through Rhodes that he was concerned about black rights and whether the Ndebele had properly understood the time limit. In turn, Loch was told that he wasn't close enough to the problem.<sup>37</sup> A commission was formed in August 1894 (the Newton Commission) to look into the Lendy affair, but it came to no conclusions as Lendy was dead by that time and other witnesses were hard to come by.<sup>38</sup> In truth it probably made no difference whether Lendy was right or wrong, whether the Ndebele understood or even whether the incident had occurred. Jameson and the people of Ft. Victoria had become polarized by Ndebele conduct and they were clamoring for action based on the Ndebele threat to themselves, not on Lendy's actions.

By 22 July the citizens of the Ft. Victoria area banded together and submitted two documents to Jameson. The first was a telegram (Jameson had returned to Salisbury) that unequivocally stated that the lives of the whites at Ft. Victoria were in danger and that the volunteer Burgher force that had defended Ft. Victoria 9 to 19 July was now breaking up and not adequate. It closed with a demand that a permanent paid force of at least 100 men be raised to protect the citizens. The

second document consisted of 22 pages of Weir and Company stationery detailing a meeting of the citizens held at Ft. Victoria. In lucid style the document spelled out that the people demanded action be taken "to settle once and for all this Matabeleland question." Otherwise, the prevailing situation was such that, according to the citizens, no capital would be invested and no commercial development would take place.<sup>39</sup>

This appeal from the citizens of Ft. Victoria was a perfect statement of the reasons for going to war with Lobengula and, as the message was being carried to Jameson, the citizens began to organize. Units were formed, training was conducted and plans were discussed as to the best method of defeating Lobengula.<sup>40</sup> By this time Jameson had decided how best to carry on the war. He recruited private citizens, promising to pay them with loot to be gained when Lobengula was defeated. Specifically, each citizen who signed up on the attestation roll (there were four such rolls) promised to "faithfully serve as a volunteer" and to "perform the duties assigned to us to the best of our abilities." In exchange for this, each citizen signing the roll would get, free, 3,000 morgen of land and 20 gold claims. Further, there were very specific times and conditions for the marking, registering and developing of claims plus clauses protecting the deceased and clauses giving

force members priority over non-force members. With such heady inducements 265 men signed up in Salisbury, 388 in Ft. Victoria (five of these refused to cross the border into Matabeleland and were dropped from the rolls) and 289 in the two southern columns.

Some of the Salisbury and Ft. Victoria men were members of the British South Africa Company Police (BSACP), but since the BSACP had been cut to less than a quarter its original size as an economy measure, its members joined whatever volunteer unit they desired and the BSACP ceased to exist until the war was over and the volunteers disbanded. At that time the BSACP reformed.

The last two columns consisted of all manner of men from South Africa who wanted to go to Rhodesia. One southern column was pure civilian while the other under Lt. Col. Goold-Adams, commander of the Bechuanaland Border Police (BBP) consisted of his unit plus a few Imperial troops placed there to give the British High Commissioner for Cape Colony an excuse to annex Matabeleland.<sup>41</sup>

Jameson's idea was paying off. He set about making provisions for outfitting and arming his new force. By September he had almost every man issued a .450/.577 Martini-Henry, had a number of horses rounded up for use by mounted elements and had procured a total of eleven

.303 caliber Maxim machine guns for his "artillery troops."<sup>42</sup> The new forces took care of organizing themselves and arranging for their own leadership. Those in Ft. Victoria retained a great deal of their earlier organization, including the name "Victoria Rangers," with a natural leader and innovative trainer named Major Allan Wilson in command. Wilson quickly won the undying loyalty of his men, partly as a result of his hard training. By the time the columns were ready to move and effect a link-up, the Victoria Rangers were as tight, efficient and proud a unit, in all military aspects, as one had a right to expect in the circumstances.<sup>43</sup>

Bulawayo was the objective of the entire operation. The Salisbury and Ft. Victoria columns were to march from their respective start points to Iron Mine Hill (see Figure 7) where they would link up and advance as one unit upon Bulawayo. The two southern columns were combined under Lt. Col. Goold-Adams before crossing into Rhodesia and were to advance on Bulawayo as either a diversion or a fixing force. Tactical offensive action does not seem to have been a part of the plan. Each column had a highly developed laager it was to form and fortify daily (much like a Roman legion always fortified every night) thereby slowing the rate of march but increasing the security of the force from

attack. The assumption was made that Lobengula would attack and destroy himself on the weapons of the laager, thereby opening the way for an unopposed, triumphal walk to Bulawayo.<sup>44</sup> What would have happened had Lobengula lured the columns on and then mounted a coordinated attack while they were crossing a river is open to speculation.

Such strategic offensive-tactical defensive plans can frequently dull the psychological edge of a force and destroy the personal aggressive attitude. This does not seem to have been the case with the Salisbury or Victoria columns. Both columns had a cloud of scouts about them and as they linked up at Iron Mine Hill on 16 October there was not a marked fall-off in the aggressiveness of the people concerned. On 23 October scouts from the column and the Ndebele clashed, and though one would think that scouts from the tactically defensive force would retreat pell mell so that a laager could be formed, the opposite took place. The column's scouts seized the initiative and killed seven of the Ndebele.

As might be expected of the Ndebele, when they decided to attack they "pulled out the stops" and exerted tremendous effort, albeit in a rather non-imaginative manner. On two occasions, at the Shangani River on 25 October and at the Imbembesi River on

1 November, the Ndebele attacked. At the Shangani the Ndebele had planned a night attack but for various reasons postponed it until dawn. When actually mounted, the attack by the Ndebele incorporated firearms (many of the ones given in settlement of the Rudd Concession) and was not driven home to close range. Ndebele skill with weapons was non-existent and they had not the slightest idea about taking cover; needless to say they took a severe drubbing, losing an estimated 350 to 500 men from an attacking force of 3,500 to 3,800. The attack on the laager at the Imbembesi went much the same way. Though the Ndebele closed the range considerably, they still relied heavily on firearms so that they came forward slowly, in dense but irregular formations. Fire from the Maxim guns of the laager was devastating, Ndebele dead lay in heaps about the laager. Of a force of some 6,100 men, casualties ran close to 2,000. The Ndebele army fell back on Bulawayo in poor order. By the evening of 2 November the king packed his belongings and evacuated Bulawayo. Troops from the Salisbury and Victoria columns occupied the town (ahead of Lt. Col. Goold-Adams, thereby foiling Loch's annexation plans) on the afternoon of 4 November.<sup>45</sup>

Reports from scouts, spies and escaped Mashona slave girls poured into Bulawayo. George Grootboom, a

half-caste, was sent after the king with a message proposing a peace parley. On 7 November a message arrived from Lobengula that he would be returning to make peace in two days. When he didn't show up at Bulawayo and no further messages were received, Jameson decided to pursue the king. Accordingly he formed a "mobile" column (not really mobile at all due to the presence of too many wagons drawn by oxen) consisting of elements from the three major columns, each element commanded by a senior leader of its parent column. Of the three element leaders, Forbes, Wilson and Raaff, Jameson placed Forbes in charge. Since each leader had the option of bringing those he desired on his element, an unusually high proportion of officers and NCO's volunteered from each column for inclusion in their respective elements. Jameson's effort to prevent bickering among the columns in Bulawayo as to whose men would get the glory of capturing the king simply transferred the bickering to the "mobile" column where it would be heard after every tactical decision by Forbes. Further, thanks to the high percentage of officers and NCO's, the amount of bickering was bound to be great and tended to weaken junior leader dedication and willingness to follow orders. Too many cooks were standing around the kettle, unity of command had been prejudiced; soon the cooks would be in the kettle.

Initial movement of the "mobile" column was slow, bickering was intense, and horses and oxen were collapsing due to lack of good grazing opportunities. It soon became clear to Forbes that he was not catching up with the king at all. He cut his force on 24 November, keeping 268 men and eight wagons and sending the remaining wagons and 280 men back to Bulawayo (see Figure 8). On 27 November he made yet another reduction in force, keeping 158 men and sending the eight wagons and 110 men remaining to an intermediate link-up point, the Inyati drift on the Shangani River. Each time the force was cut Forbes attempted to keep the stronger horses and the "better" men. As is human nature, however, the officers and NCO's commandeered horses and the proportion of officers and NCO's under Forbes grew. Bickering grew at a rapid rate, as did reluctance to follow orders.<sup>46</sup>

Dawn on 3 December found the Mobile Column spooring the king and his wagons on a course parallel to the Shangani River and heading towards a drift. As the day wore on, capture of two Ndebele herd boys indicated that the king was not far ahead. Weather was beginning to influence the action as the rains had started, the ground was getting soft and movement across it took more energy. Forbes made a decision to send a patrol after the king, with instructions to determine his precise

location and the feasibility of seizing him, and, upon securing that information, to return to the Mobile Column by dusk. Wilson was given this job and told to take fifteen men. Once again officers and NCO's wanted to go and the number crept up to twenty, including Wilson and seven other officers of the Victoria Rangers. As an afterthought, the scout, Burnham, was sent to join Wilson, bringing the number to twenty-one. Forbes laagered on the south bank of the Shangani, about 800 yards from the drift, as Wilson's Patrol disappeared from sight.<sup>47</sup> About 8 PM that night Troopers Judd and Ebbage returned stating that their horses had gone lame and Wilson had sent them back so as not to slow the Patrol down. At 11:45 PM, Captain Napier and Troopers Robertson and Bain arrived at the laager with a message from Wilson. They had found the king's laager but had not been able to see or capture the king. Deciding to remain in the area, they were hidden for the night about 1200 yards from the king's laager and "asked Forbes to go on with the Column and Maxim Guns to be there at 4 AM next morning."<sup>48</sup> After a conference with Raaff, Forbes decided to send Captain Borrow and twenty men from the original Salisbury column to reinforce Wilson, leaving the option to advance or retire up to Wilson. Borrow rode off with his twenty men, Trooper Robertson (returned from Wilson,

now acting as a guide) and a second scout, Ingram.<sup>49</sup>

Before dawn on 4 December Troopers Landsberg and Nesbitt returned saying that they had become separated and lost their way. At about dawn Forbes broke up his laager and started moving towards the drift. He was attacked by some Ndebele, dug in his heels and moved neither forward nor back. Within moments, a thunderburst of firing was heard from north of the river. This firing continued for over three hours before lapsing into silence. During this time the attack on Forbes' Column slackened and he moved about 600 yards farther from the drift to better cover. As the noise of firing from the north died away, Burnham, Ingram and Trooper Gooding rode into the laager, Burnham saying to Forbes, "I think I may say we are the sole survivors...."<sup>50</sup>

Forbes' position, though not really all that bad, appeared to be grim. Thirty-four men had just been "eaten up" by the enemy. In such instances the human mind does not think of the 124 men left. Forbes and his men looked about them and saw no food and no medical supplies and, as a result of their own recent fight, five wounded men, sixteen dead horses, and ammunition nearly half expended. Panic set in, especially among the men dismounted due to the death of their horses. Bickering grew apace and faith in

Forbes collapsed as his efforts to placate Raaff and other complainers were interpreted as weakness on his part. His dispatch of Ingram and Trooper Lynch to Bulawayo with a request for help was interpreted as weakness on his part. His request for help was misinterpreted by the men who pressed "farewell" letters into Ingram's and Lynch's hands as the two rode out. A retreat to the Inyati Drift began.

With every step of the way Ndebele pressure increased and organization decreased. By 7 December talk of mutiny was rife. The Column was nearly surrounded at one point, and had to sneak away in the night. Morale plummeted as men threw away equipment (blankets, raincoats, etc.) and killed their lame and dying horses for food. Command and order collapsed by 10 December as each of the officers present thought that he could do the job better and each attracted his own coterie of NCO's and men. Raaff openly claimed that he was in charge of the Column. Luck or Providence preserved them as Ndebele pressure slacked off following an unsuccessful attack on the 12th that was repulsed by Maxim fire directed by Pyke, from the Victoria Rangers, and Nesbitt, the survivor from Borrow's reinforcements to Wilson. Finally, on 14 December, the Column linked up with F.C. Selous who was scouting for the relief party. The ordeal was over.<sup>51</sup>

Men's minds sometimes work in strange ways for, while Forbes was retreating, the Ndebele Regiments that were not pursuing Forbes were coming into Bulawayo to surrender. The disastrous battles of the Shangani and the Imbembesi, the loss of Bulawayo, the retreat, the fact that the Column was pursuing the king, and the fight put up by Wilson had shattered Ndebele morale. Lobengula's death from smallpox on 22 or 23 December ended all resistance. By Christmas the forces had been disbanded, Jameson re-established the BSACP and threw Matabeleland open for prospecting. Save, literally, for the shouting, the war was over.<sup>52</sup>

What of Wilson and his thirty-three men? One wonders how they died, whether they sang at the end, and if their deaths had been wasted. Victorian sources all say that the Wilson group formed a defensive perimeter with the carcasses of their horses and fought to the bitter end. Finally, with ammunition spent or almost so, they met the final charge of the enemy by standing and singing "God Save the Queen." For sources these works either quote nothing or quote something along the line of some native told someone, etc.<sup>53</sup> Revisionists of history and debunkers of legends should have had a field day with Wilson; but if they do debunk Wilson and they are correct, then how did the war end so quickly? How did a mighty race, people who charged into the

muzzles of machine guns while armed with only a rifle or assegai and shield, decide that it was time to surrender?

Burnham, Ingram and Gooding (the last men back from the Patrol) all agree that at dawn on the 4th Wilson and his men spurred their way into the heart of the encamped Ndebele and got to the laager of the king. The laager was deserted and Wilson's men were fired upon. Wilson retreated, losing two horses, and made a stand in a clearing to check temporarily the pursuing Ndebele. Though initially successful, he lost five more horses dead and three men wounded. Wilson continued to withdraw, hoping to get back to the Column. At that point he sent Burnham back with a report on the situation and a request for help. Since Burnham had asked for company, Wilson sent Ingram, the other scout, and Borrow sent his man Gooding. The last any white man saw of Wilson, he continued to retreat, some men doubling on horses, all straining to get to a place where they could hold off the Ndebele until help arrived.<sup>54</sup>

Before going on, the question of cowardice on the part of Burnham, Ingram and Gooding must be discussed. J.C. Coghlan and others have so accused the trio, basing their claim on an alleged deathbed confession by Gooding that the three men got scared and ran. Some of this must be extrapolation on Coghlan's part, for in a letter

to Jack Carruthers (the man who helped Ingram and Lynch when they first got to Bulawayo, and who, with Selous, debriefed Ingram) Coghlan admitted that he had no solid evidence on Gooding but that a man had told him that Wools-Sampson (British official) had told the man that Gooding had confessed. No other original evidence of cowardice of any sort exists. Contrary to this we have the stories of all three men who were debriefed separately and testified at a court of inquiry. The stories were not contradictory. Secondly, if Wilson dispatched three men the night previous (Captain Napier plus two) to ask for help when his total strength was nineteen, would it not make sense to send someone when the situation was worse and his strength was thirty-seven? Further, would it not make sense to send one or two extra men to insure someone getting through? Who better to send than the scout? What better choice for a companion than the other scout, Ingram; especially since Ingram was armed with a Schneider conversion of an Enfield, chambered for .577, therefore making his ammunition non-interchangeable with the others and his load, due to the cartridge's greater weight, certainly less than the standard 100 rounds.<sup>55</sup> Why then was Gooding sent with Burnham and Ingram? Did he have a good horse, or was he a coward who ran, and on whom Burnham and Ingram took pity? If each main column had

wanted to get its people on Forbes' Column then is it not logical for Borrow to want to get a Salisbury man out so he could tell the city of Salisbury of their fate? Probably so, for Gooding's account of the orders from Borrow is corroborated and it surely sounds like Borrow had a premonition of death. There can be little question that the three men were deliberately dispatched, especially when one with military experience projects himself into the position of Wilson and Borrow; Burnham, Ingram and Gooding were not cowards who fled.<sup>56</sup>

In considering the fate of Wilson's Shangani Patrol, the only sources existing are blacks who were interviewed as late as forty years after the event. When reading them, one may think that the black is trying to make the white feel good by telling him a story of great courage. One should remember that between the death of Wilson and the death of the king, the vast majority of Ndebele warriors surrendered. It is obvious that something drastic happened to make those men surrender. In all, accounts exist from Dawson who, in his trading, and mission for Jameson in March 1894, talked to many natives; and the following blacks: Mjaan, Machasha, Mazitulela, M'kotchwana, Mhlalo, Ginyalitsha, Siatcha, Sivala, Gambo, and Mziki (in actuality an old black and his sons, interviewed by A.A. Campbell).

Every black account speaks of bravery. The fight

must have lasted a long time for Ginyalitsha says, "The people who had died in the morning had already blown up by the time the battle was over." None surrendered, all fought to the death and died without a whimper. As Mhlalo says, "When ammunition was gone, they were assegaid, covering their eyes." All the natives said that the whites sang, but no song could be identified. Many blacks, including Ginyalitsha, Sivala, Mahoko and Mhlalo repeated the cheer "Hip Hip Hurray." Could it be that the whites cheered when they hit a native or when an attack was broken up? Machasha says, "We were preparing to rush in again when all the whites that could stood up, took their hats off, and sang. We were so surprised that it took us some time to make up our minds what to do." It is probable that men facing their end over a long period of time will not remain silent. Whether the Patrol prayed, cheered, sang or whatever, it seems certain that they orally communicated defiance to the enemy.<sup>57</sup>

Likewise, it appears certain that the Patrol had a hand in ending the war. It is recorded that Mjaan (the chief induna or combat leader) told Rhodes upon the former's surrender, "It was a great killing, but for me speaking in the early morning with Kumalo (the king) I was sad. 'Why,' said everyone. Because I was thinking that if it took so many to kill four and thirty whites,

how many should I need to drive them back across the mountains?" Thoughts similar to this run through all the statements. The Ndebele, as men, appreciated bravery in others. Mziki says he is "...glad that courage lives on in another race." Upon his surrender Mjaan was overheard telling some of his bachelor warriors, "We were fighting men of men whose fathers were men of men before them. They fought and died together. Those who could have saved themselves chose to remain and die with their brothers. Do not forget this. You did not think the white men were as brave as the Ndebele; but now you must see they are men indeed, to whom you are as but timid girls."<sup>58</sup>

Does the legend of Allan Wilson and his Shangani Patrol constitute part of a warrior heritage? It is apparent that, regardless of background, the men of the Patrol (especially those who still had horses when they stopped moving and made their stand) thought more of some intangible system of values than of their lives. Further, the impetuosity of their actions and the stubbornness of their stand appear to ring true and to have had a terrible effect. Without additional motivation, the larger portion of the Ndebele surrendered soon after the battle. For one shining moment Wilson and his men were truly warriors as earlier defined. Allan Wilson and his Shangani Patrol deserved their

legend and left a heritage for those who desire to follow.

## CHAPTER II

### Endnotes

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Africa (London: Rowland Ward and Co., Ltd., 1893), p. 81.

12. GEN/GLA Glass Papers, p. 13.
13. Two exceptions to this were F.C. Selous who obtained Lobengula's permission to hunt freely on Ndebele land and George Westbeech who likewise hunted and then opened a dry goods/trading store in the Pandamatenga area near Victoria Falls. This store was frequented by all tribes plus a few whites. Killing apparently did not occur here as that was not part of the "game"; only the king could order killing of the "Maholi."
14. CO 4 Papers of Johannes Wilhelm Colenbrander.
15. S.J. Depelchin, "Diaries of the Jesuit Missionaries," Rhodesiana, #4 (1959), The Rhodesiana Society, Salisbury, pp. 49-51; D.W. Phillipson, Mosi-oa-Tunya: A Handbook to the Victoria Falls Region (Salisbury: Longman Rhodesia, 1975), pp. 73-77.
16. Robert Cary, Charter Royal (Capetown: Howard Timmins, 1970), pp. 28-35; Moffat Treaty of 1888 (named after the prime negotiator, Rev. J. Moffat, son of the Rev. R. Moffat mentioned earlier).
17. Rudd Concession; HO 1/4/1-8 Papers of Hugh Marshal Hole, draft of "Matabele Concession" with notes by Hugh Marshal Hole; Phillipson, Mosi, pp. 80-87.
18. 'Mziki, 'Mlimo, p. 185; WI 6/1/1 Wilson Papers.
19. Cary, Charter, pp. 33-37; WI 6/1/1 Wilson Papers; FT 2/1 Papers of Ivon Fry.
20. S 1428/4 High Commissioner for South Africa, Correspondence file.
21. Peter Gibbs, The First Line of Defence (Salisbury: British South Africa Police Board of Trustees, 1972), pp. 18-41.
22. Unless otherwise noted, all ranks in Chapter II and III were either honorary, assumed or ESAC Police ranks and were not backed by Imperial commissions. Forbes did have Imperial experience but not a majority.
23. J.C. Barnes, "The Battle of Massi Kessi," Rhodesiana, #32 (March 1975), The Rhodesiana Society, Salisbury,

pp. 1-26.

24. GEN/GLA Glass Papers, p. 8.
25. Ibid., pp. 6-7, 127-129.
26. Ibid., pp. 13-14.
27. A 2/1/2 Letter from Jameson to Rev. J. Moffat.
28. GEN/GLA Glass Papers, pp. 22-24; GEN-P/SEL Papers of F.C. Selous.
29. GEN/GLA Glass Papers, pp. 22-23.
30. D. Dogle, "The Rise and Fall of the Matabele Nation 1893," Rhodesiana, #14 (July 1966), The Rhodesiana Society, Salisbury, pp. 51-61.
31. GEN-P/SEL Selous Papers.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid., pp. 100-101. It must be remembered that up to this time all expenses of the concession, charter and pioneer column were borne by Rhodes.
34. Ibid., pp. 95-98.
35. The Holy Bible, Authorized King James Version (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), Luke, XIV, 31.
36. GEN/GLA Glass Papers, pp. 103-106.
37. Ibid., pp. 111-115.
38. Ibid., pp. 126-127.
39. DV 13/6/1 Appeal from the Citizens of Victoria.
40. BI 3/4 Diary of Edward C. Tyndale-Biscoe.
41. B 4/2/4 Victoria Defence Force Attestation Roll; B 4/2/2 Roll of Officers, Warrant Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men Entitled to the Medal and Clasp or Clasps; L 7/10/1 Police Deferred Pay Register, Matabeleland Field Force 1893; B 4/2/3 Nominal Roll of Raaff's Column; B 4/2/1 British South Africa Company Roll of Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men of the Company's Forces Entitled to the Medal for Operations in

- Matabeleland, Rhodesia 1893; Gibbs, Line, pp. 106-108.
42. L 2/2/106 Letters of Dr. L.S. Jameson.
  43. CA 2/1/1 Diary of E.V. Campbell; CA 4/4/1 Papers of Jack Carruthers; "Biography of Allan Wilson," Rhodesia Herald Weekly (2 Feb. 1894), Salisbury, p. 3.
  44. PA 1/1/1 Papers of George Parson; MA 9/1/95 Letters of Frank Oswald Mallett.
  45. PA 1/1/1 Parson Papers; CA 2/1/1 Campbell Diary; MA 9/1/95-99 Mallett Letters; WI 9/2/4 Papers of John C. Willoughby; BA 1/1 Papers of William Mostyn Barnard; D.G. Grisborne, "Occupation of Matabeleland 1893," Rhodesiana. #18 (July 1968), The Rhodesiana Society, Salisbury, pp. 1-12.
  46. Wills, Downfall, pp. 135-153 (extract copy of the Report of Major P.W. Forbes); CA 4/4/1 Carruthers Papers; PO 2/2/1 Diary of Captain John Ponsonby; Cary, Time, pp. 136-146.
  47. It is perhaps technically correct to refer to the unit under Forbes as the "Shangani Patrol" and the unit to be spun off as "Wilson's Party." This is contrary to the current common usage, which is "Wilson's Shangani Patrol," and contrary to the connotation of the word "patrol." Therefore, this paper will refer to "Wilson's Shangani Patrol" and "Forbes' Mobile Column." John O'Reilly, Pursuit of the King (Bulawayo: Books of Rhodesia, 1970), pp. 47-54.
  48. NA 1/1 Diary of William Napier.
  49. O'Reilly, Pursuit, pp. 63-65.
  50. Wills, Downfall, pp. 164-166 (Forbes Report).
  51. Cary, Time, pp. 135-136; Wills, Downfall, pp. 166-173 (Forbes Report); CA 4/4/1 Carruthers Papers; PO 2/2/1 Ponsonby Diary; CA 2/1/1 Campbell Diary; F.C. Selous, "Account of the War," The African Review, Vol. 3 (10 Feb. 1894), Wills, Cannell and Rider Haggard, Ltd., London, pp. 179-186.
  52. PA 1/1/1 Parson Papers; O'Reilly, Pursuit, pp. 109-112.

53. S.J. Du Toit, Rhodesia Past and Present (London: William Heinemann, 1894), pp. 133-150; Wills, Downfall, pp. 236-240.
54. Cary, Time, pp. 91, 101-104; Frederick Russell Burnham, Scouting on Two Continents (New York: Doubleday Page and Co., 1927).
55. In July 1979 the author found Ingram's personal effects, along with some papers, in the hands of a private citizen in Bulawayo. The caliber of his weapon was obvious. Inspection of other effects reveals that Ingram was accoutred as one would expect of a light horseman and scout. Saddle, saddle bags and other equipment could not have borne a great load of reserve ammunition, especially considering survival items which he carried on his horse. Depending on the type ammunition carried, the .450/.577 was loaded with bullets of from 368 to 450 grains while the .577 bullets varied from 680 to 900. Assuming the most common weight bullet (and approximate powder charge) the .577 ammunition would be 58% again as heavy as the .450/.577. There is a high probability, especially considering the idea that scouts did not expect long term fights, that Ingram was carrying less than the "required" 100 rounds. It is a matter of record that when Ingram got back to Bulawayo he had 21 rounds left.  
Such a fact would have been of major importance to Wilson. It is critical that a leader know precisely what equipment and how much ammunition is present in his unit. As a matter of course, Wilson inspected his original body of 20 men for presence of ammunition prior to departing the Mobile Column and he reported this to Forbes before he left. Logic indicates that if people had to be sent, Ingram was ideal. This cannot have escaped Wilson's notice.
56. Cary, Time, pp. 136-141, 102-103; Burnham, Scouting; CA 4/1/6-7 Papers of John Carruthers; Selous, "Account"; P. Hartridge, "Henry Borrow: Pioneer and Hero," Rhodesiana, #18 (July 1968), The Rhodesiana Society, Salisbury, pp. 22-36.
57. WI 8 Papers of R. Foster Windram (interviews with blacks, first oral history); HO 1/3/17-51 Papers of H.M. Hole (Dawson Letters); O'Reilly, Pursuit, pp. 82-112; R. Summers and C.W.D. Pagden, The Warriors (Capetown: Books of Africa, 1970), p. 154.
58. O'Reilly, Pursuit, pp. 101-102.

### CHAPTER III

#### ONLY THE STRONG SURVIVE

Activities in Rhodesia quickly settled down after the 1893 Matabele War. Whites went about their business, secure in the knowledge that all their problems were over and that only prosperity lay ahead. Unknown to them, resentment was simmering beneath the surface, ready to burst into the open. Both major tribes in Rhodesia, though they were certainly better off economically under the whites, resented the change in their lifestyles, and in some cases, social customs.

The Matabele found that the one remedy for want which in the old days they had been wont to ply so readily--namely, the wholesale raiding of their weaker neighbours--was under the new regime denied them. Nowadays, not only was every such raid prevented or punished as unlawful, but even in their home life their liberties were interfered with, and trifling thefts of cattle from a neighbour's herd, or the quiet putting away of a lazy slave or of a quarrelsome stepmother, were now treated as crimes by policemen of their own blood and colour, but creatures of the white man, strutting among them with as much consequence and power as any of the royal indunas.<sup>1</sup>

Further, the 'Mlimo (a semi-god roughly the equivalent of the prophet of Delphi) preached against the whites and urged rebellion, claiming that they would use magic to turn white bullets into water and ensure black

victory.<sup>2</sup>

Administrative actions on the part of the company compounded the problem. In order to ensure a flow of labor into the mines the BSAC levied a hut tax of 10/, in cash, on every dwelling. Depending upon the area, it took a native laborer from just under a month to as long as two months' work in the mines to pay off this annual tax.<sup>3</sup> Those who managed to pay off the tax and still refused to work were rounded up as forced labor by native policemen and some whites. The old saying that all one needed to seize a Mashona kraal was a sjambok (hippo hide whip) and a match was thoroughly tested. Forced labor was common, whipping was common and, especially in the case of the Mashona, it made them feel they were being treated as badly as they had been under Lobengula but by a people who were less numerous than the Ndebele.<sup>4</sup>

Not content with simple victory in 1893, the BSAC had exacted a reparations payment obligation from the Ndebele. This was to be paid in cattle but it was neither fixed nor collected at one time. Thus, from native eyes it appeared that white men came and took cattle whenever they wanted, regardless of whatever tallies were kept by the BSAC. To complicate matters, 1895 saw a rinderpest epidemic sweep through from the north. In attempts to control the epidemic the whites

shot diseased animals (though they did not burn the carcasses) and again, from the native point of view, it appeared that the whites brought a disease and then shot the infected native cattle for no reason. Lastly, if that were not enough, the whites took the very cattle that they had confiscated, and parceled them right back out to the natives, who were to act as herdboys in exchange for the milk!<sup>5</sup>

On 29 December 1895, Dr. L.S. Jameson took the entire organized white armed forces (formerly BSACP, now BSAP) of Rhodesia on an ill-fated raid to overthrow the Boer government of the Transvaal. They were all captured by the Boers, thereby leaving Rhodesia completely denuded of protection.<sup>6</sup> The only remaining force was the native police and these people were in a poor position. Since they were not issued rations, some turned into despots and took whatever they liked from the natives at any time they pleased. These men were "marked" for later extermination. Other native police were coerced through ties of blood to assist the natives. News of the Jameson Raid spread quickly among the natives, they prepared a blow and when it fell it came like a whirlwind.<sup>7</sup>

Rebellion broke out on the evening of 20 March 1896 near Umgorshwini on the Umzingwani River. Eight native policemen were in the process of rounding up a native

criminal, plus whatever else they took a fancy to, when they in turn were set upon and one was killed.<sup>8</sup> Within three days the whole of Matabeleland was in flames. Everywhere the whites (and the "marked" native police) were slain, without regard to age or sex. Normally they were slain by some "treacherous" means so that they were unarmed and had no chance of defending themselves. Even those whites who had befriended the natives, represented them in complaints against the BSAC, or taken native wives were slain. Throughout the country, horror stories of disembowelled women and brained babies filtered back to the towns.<sup>9</sup>

Oral histories taken from natives after the Rebellion indicate an attitude on the natives' part that contributed to the whites' feelings of being atrocity victims. Captured natives expressed feelings ranging from friendship to something resembling love for certain whites. These very same natives then admitted murdering, in cold blood, these very same whites. In one case, three whites, nicknamed "Mandevu," "Mandisi," and "Mani," who had taken native wives and befriended the natives were slain by these natives. "Mandisi" had nursed a black named Nganganyoni Mhlope back to health during a sickness. This same black slew "Mandisi" with a club. The black's reasoning for doing so made perfect sense to himself. To white people,

their rationalization was totally incomprehensible. Whites reacted with feelings of rage and resolved themselves to retaliate.<sup>10</sup>

At Bulawayo and other locations scattered about the country, whatever white people who could collect themselves together formed laagers. The smaller of these laagers had to be relieved and the people in Bulawayo and larger towns set about doing so. A call for help was sent to the BSAC, which began to gear up for war in much the same manner as they had for 1893. In Salisbury, the Rhodesia Horse Volunteers (a kind of BSAC National Guard) were disbanded and the members joined other units such as the Rhodesia Horse, the Mashonaland Field Force (intended to patrol Mashonaland if trouble came) and the Matabeleland Relief Force. This last force marched for Bulawayo where they linked up with the Matabeleland Field Force. Elements of the combined forces began relieving small local laagers.

Concurrently, the Imperial Government stepped in by appointing a Resident Commissioner for Rhodesia, the first of whom was Sir Richard Martin. His job was to protect government interests and to act as commander-in-chief of the Company's forces. The BSAC appointed Mr. Justice Vintcent as Administrator pending the arrival of Earl Grey to take the post. On arrival in Salisbury,

Grey's job was to oversee all Company business in finance, supply, records and so forth. An offer was made to the BSAC by the Government to second officers to the Company and detail units to the Company provided the Company paid the full cost of wages and equipment. This offer was accepted and the Government seconded a number of people in South Africa. Further, four companies of Imperial Mounted Infantry were dispatched from England under the command of Lt. Col. E.A.H. Alderson. While these troops were on the high seas, Lt. Col. H. Plumer, a seconded Imperial officer, began to raise a force of Boer and British volunteers in South Africa. These men signed an attestation roll agreement much like those signed during the 1893 War. Upon complete formation of the unit, also designated the Matabeleland Relief Force, it marched to Bulawayo from Tuli, thereby opening the road for supplies. After arriving in Bulawayo, Plumer took command of all armed forces in Matabeleland and completed the relief of all local laagers.<sup>11</sup>

On 15 June 1896, the Rebellion spread to Mashonaland with the same sort of sudden violence, murder of whites (see Figure 9) and local laager formation as seen in Matabeleland. Men from Salisbury who had gone to Bulawayo returned to Salisbury and, under the command of Mr. Vintcent, began to relieve local laagers. With

the new development, the Mounted Infantry was diverted to Beira where they disembarked, marched to Umtali and from there fought their way into Salisbury, also opening up the supply route to that city from Beira. Alderson took command of all forces in Mashonaland, both Imperial and Company. On the ship ahead of Alderson had been Major General Sir Frederick Carrington, who landed in Capetown and, upon arrival in Bulawayo, assumed the duties of Resident Commissioner. His chief of staff, Colonel R.S.S. Baden-Powell, arrived shortly thereafter (same ship as Alderson, Baden-Powell getting off in Capetown and supervising Alderson's diversion) and assisted with scouting and intelligence gathering, in addition to normal staff work.<sup>12</sup>

By the end of July organization in Rhodesia was in its final form for the Rebellion. Grey had arrived and taken charge of the normal Company administrative apparatus. Through the Company, he also had a hand in paying and supplying all forces in Rhodesia. Carrington was the Resident Commissioner with two military subordinates under him: Plumer for Matabeleland and Alderson for Mashonaland. Under these fell all units of the area, both Company and Imperial. This chain of command was properly flexible, for as more pure BSAC forces were added from South Africa (the Afrikaner

Corps of Boer volunteers and the Cape Boys Corps of native volunteers under J. Colenbrander) these were accommodated within the command without organizational change. Rhodesian forces reformed into two groups, the Matabeleland Field Force and Mashonaland Field Force. Under these fell two Artillery Troops, Garrison Troops, named after either Bulawayo or Salisbury and used for garrisoning the town laager, and various numbers of Mounted and Dismounted Troops. All of the units later became, for clarity on paymaster rolls, variously lettered troops of the (reconstituted) Rhodesia Horse. For clarity in field operations, these units were named after their Troop Commander, thus giving rise, for example, to Selous' Scouts and Grey's Scouts, which names have been retained by units in the Rhodesian Army today.

By January 1897 Carrington, Alderson and most of the Imperial troops were gone, released back to the Empire from the Company. The organization survived, with Sir Richard Martin reassuming the post of Resident Commissioner and various Company officers taking subordinate posts. The BSAP was reconstituted and gradually absorbed various Troops of the Rhodesia Horse. On termination of the Rebellion, all units in the Company employ, save the BSAP, were disbanded. Unlike the 1893 War, this organization led to little

bickering and contributed to smooth, integrated action between Company and Imperial troops. This eased the difficulties that would otherwise have arisen in prosecuting the war.<sup>13</sup>

Before going onward, a look at the case of one of the local laagers would be useful. Twenty-seven miles northwest of Salisbury lies the valley of Mazoe (see Figure 10), oriented roughly north-south. At the northern end of the valley was a mine (the Alice mine), a telegraph office (in a pole and dagga hut) and a Native Commissioner's hut. On 16 June Mr. Salthouse, manager of the mine, received a telegram warning him of trouble. Further telegrams arrived on the 17th, these describing murders of white men southeast of Salisbury. Mr. Salthouse reacted by gathering all whites in the neighborhood, a total of nine men and three women. By the morning of the 18th, a wagonette with two whites and a Cape boy had arrived, sent by Mr. Vintcent from Salisbury to transport the ladies. The men had fortified the top of a kopje located a mile and a half from the telegraph office. Later on the 18th, six of the men (including husbands of two of the women, who were left on the kopje) set out for Salisbury. Mr. Salthouse then loaded the three women plus two men and the Cape boy (named Hendritz) into the wagonette and sent them off to Salisbury before he and

two other men named Blakiston and Routledge returned to the telegraph office. At the office they notified Mr. Vintcent by wire that they were coming in but, on leaving the office, they heard shooting and returned to the kopje. There they found themselves surrounded, along with the wagonette's occupants, who had returned, and three survivors of the six-man party, both married men and one other of the group having been killed. Blakiston and Routledge volunteered to go to the telegraph office and wire word of their new plight to Salisbury. They did so, but on their return one was cut down by natives in sight of the laager while the other disappeared from view, never to be seen again. The Mashona rebels closed in on the kopje.

Mr. Vintcent had, in the meantime, dispatched a patrol under Lt. Judson to assist the whites, based on the first telegram, and a second patrol of twelve men under Captain Nesbitt, based on Routledge's and Blakiston's final telegram. The first patrol (Judson) fought its way into the kopje. Judson sent a note back out with Hendritz requesting forty men to rescue the group. Captain Nesbitt intercepted Hendritz, read the note and, despite his lack of numbers, carried on, fighting his way to the laager. A conference with Salthouse and Judson led Nesbitt to decide to fight his way back out immediately. Some iron plates were found

and these were used to armor the wagonette (see Figure 11). Nesbitt dismounted a number of men and put every animal possible in harness for pulling the wagonette. He put the women inside, clustered eighteen dismounted men (one named Pascoe got on top) and four mounted men about it. Four mounted men served as advance riders ahead of the wagonette and four mounted men served as rear guard behind it. Thus organized and facing the eight-mile long Mazoe valley, now literally a "valley of death," Nesbitt moved out at the double.

From a spot less than a mile from the kopje all the way to the exit (southern end) of the valley, the party was under continuous attack. As men were wounded they were put in the wagonette while the dead were left behind. Dead horses were cut from the traces so as not to impede the wagonette. Pascoe, atop the wagonette, performed yeoman service as he could see down into the brush and behind rocks beside the road. He kept up a steady fire and, despite his exposed position, came through unscathed. One advance rider was severely wounded and as he was being helped by a trooper named Arnott they turned round and saw natives swarming around the wagonette. Fearing the worst, and being at the exit to the valley, they spurred their horses for Salisbury and there reported the massacre of the party. Fortunately, the party fought off the attack in question and fought

the remaining way out of the valley. They beat off pursuers and arrived in Salisbury about 9 PM, having lost eight horses, three men killed, and four men wounded (see Figure 12).<sup>14</sup>

From the outbreak of hostilities until the arrival of other forces and the completion of military organization, the military jobs were easy to define. They were to relieve the local laagers, defend what was possessed, and do some damage to the enemy if possible. Regardless of the enemy's situation, the shortage of troops dictated that the third job be done through the use of patrols. Once Carrington and more troops arrived, however, two distinctly different theories arose as operations were delegated to Plumer and Alderson. Plumer, with the intelligence gathering assistance of Colonel Baden-Powell, opted for a policy of forts augmented by patrols, while Alderson opted for a policy of patrolling only.

On his arrival in Bulawayo, Plumer set about relieving the local laagers and, in some cases, established forts where the laagers had been. Presented with the problem of large open areas north of Bulawayo, in which powerful Ndebele forces operated, Plumer planned and executed a massive, three-pronged "search and destroy" operation. This was done from 29 June through 5 July and in its wake numerous forts were built at drifts and

other critical points.<sup>15</sup> The Ndebele forces were broken up by this action and promptly relocated south of Bulawayo in the Matopo Hills (see Figure 13), a large and virtually impregnable rock formation. Plumer ringed this with forts and instituted a vigorous program of tightening the ring and continually scouting inside the ring with small patrols.

It should be mentioned here that these forts sound great in name but in reality were any sort of location from which twenty or twenty-five men could defend themselves. Some forts were earthworks, some were fortified kopjes and some were just buildings or wagons fortified with sandbags and stones (see Figures 14, 15 and 16). As Baden-Powell put it,

Some would make a sapper snort but are nonetheless effective for all that. They are just the natural kopje's or pile of rocks, aided by art in the way of sandbag parapets and thorn bush abattis fences--easily prepared and easily held.<sup>16</sup>

Further, the "ring" of forts was by no means tight. The forts acted as a refuge for scouts, permanent look-out on critical spots, and as a communications network. Large mobile field forces backed up the whole system. Ndebele warriors rapidly found out that their lives were cat-and-mouse games with scouts, for if they came out in the open and were seen, or stayed in one place too long, a mobile force would be there in a day or so

to make things unpleasant.<sup>17</sup> By 21 August word drifted out of the Hills that the Ndebele wanted peace. Rhodes personally took charge of negotiations and placed himself in an unguarded camp in the hills where Ndebele indunas had constant and easy access to him. After weeks of parlays, a final indaba (peace talk) was held on 13 October. The Ndebele surrendered and Rhodes consequently set numerous grievances right, including cattle confiscation, forced labor and native police excesses. On 22 October, Plumer's force was disbanded, some units going to Mashonaland and the Imperial troops reverting back to Government employ.<sup>18</sup>

In the north, operations in Mashonaland did not go nearly so well. Alderson mounted patrol after patrol, each one making contact. Each time, however, the Mashona would retreat up into some kopje, laced with caves (see Figure 17), which had been used in the days of dodging the Ndebele. From inside the caves and through fissures in the rocks, the Mashona would fire at the troopers at close range, in some cases when the troopers were walking overhead. Numerous muzzle loaders were in use by the Mashona and they used kettle legs, rocks, bottle necks and other such things for projectiles. The numerous white casualties from such missiles were ghastly in appearance, and the benefit gained by the whites was nil. In four months Alderson managed only

thirty-four patrols in all of Mashonaland (six of them mounted on his trip from Umtali to Salisbury) and he secured nothing. Though two patrols hit Makoni's kraal and one hit Mashiangombi's, these two important Mashona leaders were not captured nor were their operations hindered. Analysis of Alderson's own patrol chart shows that fifteen of thirty-four patrols achieved results that were "nil" while all but one of the remainder produced only a few native casualties. Further, since the rebels were not subdued by the patrols, normal civil activity could not take place. All this was done at the cost of twenty-four dead. By November there was a great deal of muttering about Alderson's tactics, from Grey the Administrator all the way down to the lowest private. As the Company raised more private troops and brought more forces up from Matabeleland, Alderson and his Mounted Infantry were released back to Imperial control on 12 December 1896.<sup>19</sup>

By the turn of the year, Sir Richard Martin had taken over Carrington's job as resident Commissioner and commander-in-chief, while Lieutenant Colonel de Molyns, a BSAC employee, had taken command of operations in Mashonaland. From this point forward, as patrols went out and the rebels were driven into the kopje's, the troops would not follow but would build a fort commanding

routes onto and off of the kopje. Continual pressure was exerted on the rebels from the forts, in most cases by scouting. In more than a few cases, however, a fort that had a good field of fire over a kopje would be equipped with a seven pounder cannon and the garrison would play "shooting gallery" with any Mashona foolish enough to expose himself (see Figure 18).<sup>20</sup>

One by one, the indunas of the Mashona were worn down by starvation and constant harassment from the forts. Civil activity returned to normal and on 27 October 1897 the Rebellion in Mashonaland was declared over and all Company forces, save the BSAF, were disbanded.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to leaving a heritage of bravery, the Rebellion left a heritage of other, practical elements. One of these was aggressiveness, the spirit and the will to carry the fight to the enemy, which was evident in all ranks from top to bottom. The leaders' attitude was best expressed by Baden-Powell:

Lord Wolsely says 'when you get niggers on the run, keep them on the run' ...and our only chance of bringing the war to a speedy end is to go for them whenever we get the chance, and hit as hard as ever we can: any hesitation or softness is construed by them as a sign of weakness, and at once restores their confidence and courage. They expect no quarter, because, as they admit themselves, they have...killed our women and children.<sup>22</sup>

The troops themselves were even more aggressive and their attitude was fueled by their desire to retaliate for

native atrocities. This aggressiveness was quickly understood by the natives and was a significant factor in forcing an end to the war, especially in Matabeleland. The natives understood that if they exposed themselves they were going to be tracked down and mercilessly attacked. Such understandings frequently lead to a desire for peace.<sup>23</sup>

Aggressiveness was not the forte solely of the troops. Particularly in the early stages of the Rebellion, this aggressiveness was evident in the entire white population. People of both sexes and all ages armed themselves with whatever weapons were at hand and battled the rebels. Age, condition and type of weapon made no real difference. The people were not about to be engulfed by the black flood, and they aggressively employed whatever was at hand to stop it.<sup>24</sup> Figure 19 amply shows their weaponry and demeanor.

It could be argued that the construction of the forts indicated a lack of aggressiveness. However, in the years between the 1893 Matabele War and the Rebellion a significant technological change had made itself felt. The Martini-Henry in .450/.577 caliber, using black powder ammunition, had been replaced by the .303 Lee-Metford, using ammunition loaded with smokeless powder.<sup>25</sup> Though the accuracy of the two weapons expressed in mean

group size around a central point was roughly the same, the Lee-Metford offered a practical increase in "accuracy" in the field. The .303, thanks to its high muzzle velocity (nearly double that of the .450/.577), reduced the effect of aiming error caused by range estimation error on the part of the firer. Aimed fire at men as far away as 500 yards was no longer a complicated musketry/gunnery problem. Troops could fire at men as far as 900 yards away with the same probability of a hit as they would have had with the .450/.577 at 350 yards.<sup>26</sup> This, coupled with the liberal issue of the seven pounder field gun (using smokeless powder and high explosive shells), gave the Company's forces a capability in the delivery of long range weapons fire that they had not previously had. Aggressiveness became tempered with common sense. Though the Company's forces never failed to close with the rebels and carry the fight to them if required, they learned another technique. They could attack the rebels with long range fire while sitting in complete safety because the rebels could not effectively reply to this fire. Demoralization of the rebels and the desire to surrender resulted from this fire, at a relatively small cost to the Company.<sup>27</sup>

Without hindering aggressiveness, the Company's forces were learning to employ technology and technique

to inflict maximum damage on the enemy. Alderson failed to do this and was roundly criticized. During the period of his command in Salisbury, no real progress was made in ending the Rebellion. It is significant that at the end of the Rebellion the Company's dispatches heap praise on all concerned, save for Alderson, who managed to escape mention in them.<sup>28</sup>

Pragmatic aggressiveness, as shown by long range weapons fire, is also demonstrated by the Mazoe incident. The armoring of the wagonette, increasing the pulling teams and tailoring of the forces on the part of Captain Nesbitt also shows this pragmatism. Although not afraid to meet the enemy at close range, Nesbitt ensured that he had every advantage possible. A heritage of such activity is quite valuable. It leads to a nimbleness of the mind, and an inclination to apply logical thought to impending action, on the part of those who sense the full spectrum of their heritage. The combination of this practical heritage of technology and technique and the more intangible heritage of bravery contributes heavily to military success.

### CHAPTER III

#### Endnotes

1. Col. R.S.S. Baden-Powell, The Matabele Campaign 1896 (London: Methuen and Co., 1896), p. 30.
2. 'Mziki, 'Mlimo, pp. 186-193; WI 8/1 Windram Papers.
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CHAPTER IV  
THE GRIP OF THEIR FAR OFF HOLD

Civil calm and economic prosperity followed the Rebellion. Mining was vigorously pursued and white farmers began to adopt techniques of mass production agriculture. Instead of slowing development, the onset of the Boer War in 1899 fostered it and provided impetus for diversification. In addition, the Boer War provided the Company an opportunity to ingratiate itself with the Crown. Rhodes offered the services of the BSAC in prosecuting the War. Eighteen Imperial officers were seconded to the Company on "Special Service." These, including Baden-Powell and Plumer, raised the Rhodesia Frontier Force, a unit composed of white Rhodesians. Equipment and consumable supplies for the Frontier Force were provided by the Company, on promise of reimbursement by the Crown. Elements of the Frontier Force participated in the defense of Mafeking under Baden-Powell. In December the Company offered to raise, equip and maintain another force of 5,000 men. These were to be non-Rhodesians brought to Beira and thence to Salisbury, Bulawayo and the front. The War Office agreed to the offer, but insisted that the

Crown would enroll the force and transport it by sea to Beira where the Company could then take charge.

Commerical activities necessary to support this mobilization grew by leaps and bounds. The Company allowed members of its Police to join this new force (designated the Rhodesia Field Force) and most of them did so. As the War progressed, reliance on the Rhodesian link increased. The Field Force played a major role in the relief of Mafeking and in actions in the later phases of the War. Further, the shops of the Rhodesian Railways made six of the armored trains used in the Transvaal and Orange Free State. Cessation of hostilities did not end the boom. Departure of the troops was not economically traumatic due to the conversion of some of them to settlers.<sup>1</sup>

Railroads played a significant part in the War and in the economic boom that followed. Transportation and communications from Bulawayo, to and from Capetown, through Cape Colony and Bechuanaland had been critical in the early stages of the Ndebele Rebellion. Although the Western Railway connected Capetown with the De Beers Diamond Mines at Kimberly, the line was not extended through Mafeking to Bulawayo until the end of the Rebellion in 1897. The Western Railway was one of two lines serving Rhodesia. Seaports on the west coast were non-existent save for the German port of Walvis

Bay, which was isolated by the Kalahiri Desert, and three ports in Portuguese Angola which were isolated by desert and distance. Consequently, Rhodesia's second railroad was built on her only other link with the sea, the overland supply route from Beira to Umtali and Salisbury. These lines were connected during the Boer War and the completed system provided a sound foundation for further growth.

As southern Africa developed, the railroad building spread from Rhodesia northwards. Thanks to Portuguese and German intransigence and the great distances across wild areas, the easiest means of communications with the interior lay with extension of the railroad from Rhodesia into Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland (see Figure 1). First a bridge was built across the Zambesi, just below Victoria Falls, into Livingston, and from there the railroad was pushed onward to points north. Mining, mass agriculture and the railroad complemented each other, and Rhodesia continued to grow.<sup>2</sup>

As it had in the Boer War, Rhodesia answered the call of the Crown during the First World War. From a total white population of just under 24,000, Rhodesia raised 250,000 pounds sterling in public subscription, in addition to 6,000 troops. Of these troops 732 died in or because of the War. Considering the white population only, Rhodesia's contribution per capita

was the highest of any British colony. Blacks were not left out, however; 2,800 of them went to war, 168 losing their lives.<sup>3</sup>

In 1923 Rhodesia, faced with the prospect of being removed from Company control, opted for colonial home rule over amalgamation with South Africa. Under this home rule arrangement Sir Charles Coghlan was elected Rhodesia's first Prime Minister and Rhodesia officially became a "Self-Governing Colony." Coghlan obtained for Rhodesia the right to legislate, maintain an army and operate a civil service. Britain retained responsibility for foreign affairs, for promulgating "native" legislation, and retained a legislative veto. None of these powers were ever exercised.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout the 1920's and 30's, Rhodesia continued to develop and was not particularly hard hit by the Depression. During this same period, succeeding Colonial Secretaries attempted to assert, in theory, British "paramountcy" in native affairs and well-being. This policy became known as the Devonshire Declaration and, each time it was espoused, it met a storm of opposition in the colonies of Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. In all cases this opposition took the form of threats of independence or requests for amalgamation of the three colonies.<sup>5</sup>

World War II interrupted these activities in 1939.

Once again Rhodesians answered the call to war. Eleven thousand whites volunteered as did fifteen thousand natives. Considering the whites only, this was again the largest per capita contribution of manpower of any colony or country in the Empire, and, for World War II, of any country in the free world. The death rate in the total force ran almost ten percent. During the War the Rhodesian Air Force was absorbed by the Royal Air Force and all Rhodesian personnel were assigned to one of three squadrons: No. 44 (Rhodesia) (Bomber) Squadron, No. 237 (Rhodesia) (Fighter) Squadron, or No. 266 (Rhodesia) (Fighter) Squadron. Of the 2,409 Rhodesians who served in these three squadrons, 498 were killed in action. In addition to this sacrifice, Rhodesia formed and staffed the Rhodesia Air Training Group of the Royal Air Force. The good weather, lack of enemy presence, and the organized hospitality of the people (who took many trainees into their homes) made Rhodesia the ideal training ground. Over half of all Royal Air Force pilots were trained there.<sup>6</sup>

Upon the cessation of World War II it was generally understood that Rhodesia could have its independence, partly as a reward for services in the war and partly because the nation had the means to support itself. This latter item was particularly important for, unlike

Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Rhodesia had developed a vigorous and reasonably diversified economy. Much of this was due to its geographical position and its role in the Boer War and World War II. Rather than take advantage of the British attitude and opt for full independence, Rhodesia supported the ideas of Godfrey Huggins.<sup>7</sup>

Instead of independence, Huggins conceived the Federation of Northern and Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland (now Zambia, Rhodesia and Malawi in order). Though all kinds of esoteric reasons for this Federation were bandied about, there is little doubt that the main intentions were to foster Rhodesian industrialization, to provide Rhodesia with a ready supply of unskilled labor and to protect Rhodesia from the black tide sweeping in from the northern African states. Welensky, the Prime Minister of the Federation during its entire life from 1953 to 1963, admitted as much and actively pursued this policy. Throughout his tenure, threats of covert black nationalism and overt black invasion from the north were met by Rhodesian troops advancing northwards in their attempts to fight on ground outside Rhodesia.<sup>8</sup>

During this time the major black nationalist groups were formed. Dr. Banda (now head of Malawi), Kenneth Kaunda (now head of Zambia), Joshua Nkomo (now Zimbabwe

African People's Union terrorist leader), Robert Mugabe (now Zimbabwe African National Union terrorist leader), Ndabaningi Sithole (former ZANU and a leader of the opposition in the Zimbabwe-Rhodesian Parliament of 1979) and Bishop Abel Muzorewa (former ZANU and Prime Minister of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia in 1979) all got their start in this era. Resistance to these nationalist groups was heavy and violence reigned in Zambia and Malawi. The Nyasaland Emergency of 1960-61 was the culmination of the black nationalist effort in that it eradicated the white farmer base in Malawi and caused Britain to decide upon dissolution of the Federation and institution of black nationalist independence for each portion of it.<sup>9</sup> The Federation was dissolved on 31 December 1963. Malawi achieved independence on 6 July 1964 and Zambia likewise on 24 October 1964.<sup>10</sup>

Rhodesia resisted black nationalism and resented Britain's role in the demise of the Federation. Ian Smith (Prime Minister of Rhodesia) and Harold Wilson (Prime Minister of Britain) met on numerous occasions in attempts to work out a solution to the difficulties. Each man felt he had a mandate for action from his own electorate, and this, coupled with personal rigidity, led to intransigence. All attempts at a peaceful solution failed.<sup>11</sup>

During this time the black nationalist groups mounted an increasing campaign of burning, murder and sabotage in an attempt to force Britain into direct intervention in Rhodesia. This campaign failed in its main objective. As a by-product, however, it polarized Rhodesian society, including driving a majority of blacks into "alliance" with the whites as blacks were the major victims of the terror. The point of no return was finally reached; Smith and Rhodesia issued the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) on 11 November 1965.<sup>12</sup>

War, declared or undeclared, was on. Black nationalist groups split, the legal component of them remaining in Rhodesia in order to work through the legitimate, political process. The illegal, terrorist component crossed into Zambia and Botswana, established camps and used these camps as bases for raids into Rhodesia (see Figures 20, 21 and 22). Some black nationalists were given training in countries such as Tanzania, while communists came to the camps to train the rank and file. Communist bloc nations, assisted by the World Council of Churches, funneled vast quantities of aid, weapons and munitions to the black nationalists. The war gradually got hotter until 8 September 1974 when Portugal ceded Mozambique to the communist Frelimo guerillas in the Lusaka Agreement. Robert Mugabe and

and his ZANU terrorists moved into Mozambique, developing the border lands as his major base. Warfare became waged in earnest; the fight became one to the death.<sup>13</sup>

What sort of people were on the side resisting this terrorist aggression? They certainly have a claim to a rich heritage stemming from the 1893 War, the 1896 Rebellions, the Boer War and World Wars I and II. Were they aware of this heritage, and was it of any use to them? By all visible indicators, the common Rhodesian citizen was acutely aware of his heritage.

Three bona fide monuments have been erected in Rhodesia which are solely in honor of Allan Wilson and his men. In addition to those, there are two permanent displays within public buildings dedicated to the Patrol. As might be expected, the first monuments were on the actual site of the last stand. The first accounts of the stand from the Ndebele side came from those regiments which surrendered in December 1893. These accounts gave rise to the story of the gallantry and the singing of the Patrol. Interest in the Patrol was thus fueled to such an extent that in March of 1894 the trader, James Dawson, was instructed by Jameson to find the Patrol, bring back whatever evidence he could, and inter whatever was left. This he did, and, after finishing his work at the site of the last stand, he blazed a tree. On the surface thereby created he carved the words "To

Brave Men."<sup>14</sup>

Within months a public clamor grew for something better to be done. A subscription was raised and a monument consisting of a simple pylon surrounded by a four-posted, square, chain fence was erected on the spot of the last stand (see Figure 23). Upon the pylon a brass tablet with the following words was mounted:

Erected to the enduring memory of Allan Wilson  
and his Men who fell in fight against the  
Matabele on the Shangani River, December 4th,  
1893. There was no survivor.

The tree that John Dawson had carved was cut down and the section with the inscription now constitutes part of a permanent display in the National Museum of Rhodesia in Bulawayo.<sup>15</sup>

During this process, the remains of the members of the Patrol were exhumed and transported to the Zimbabwe River, near Ft. Victoria, where they were re-interred on 14 August 1894 and a new monument of original Zimbabwe stone was erected. Originally intended as the final resting spot for the Patrol, more grandiose plans were soon afoot. Rhodes had fallen in love with the stark grandeur of the Matopo Hills. He found one particular granite outcropping, called Malindidzimu (View of the World) by the Ndebele, which he picked for his own burial. The idea of burial at this spot grew in his mind until Rhodes conceived of Malindidzimu

as a sort of national shrine or Valhalla which would be the burial spot of all those "who deserve well of their country." Accordingly, a large granite block monument, 24 feet square and over 30 feet high, was prepared on a spot some 150 yards from Rhodes' intended crypt. Into each face of the monument a bronze relief depicting members of the Wilson Patrol was set (see Figures 24 and 25). On 5 July 1905 the remains of the Patrol were moved to, and still rest at, this spot.<sup>16</sup>

Public interest in the Patrol remained high. In 1938 an artist by the name of Allan Stewart conducted some painstaking research in the Archives and proceeded to paint "To the Memory of Brave Men." This painting was used as the cover design for two books<sup>17</sup> and now hangs in the foyer outside the Council Chamber of the City Hall in Bulawayo. The setting in which the painting is hung, and the diffused light from the foyer skylight give the painting an almost reverent atmosphere. To this day those who pass through the foyer hush their voices and tread lightly (see Figures 26, 27 and 28). Memorial services were held at the site of the last stand of the Patrol on a regular basis until 1971 when they were suspended pending solution of the current troubles. Visitors to the memorial in the Matopo Hills are still frequent. This area's beauty, coupled with

the effect of the plaque at the start of the pathway from the parking lot, gives this memorial, too, a reverent atmosphere.

With continued public interest, those associated with the affair were frequently asked to speak at gatherings or were feted at celebrations. This effort was strong, fostered a great deal of comradeship and sharpened the memories of the survivors and next of kin. As late as January 1926 there were claims for clarification of records and reissue of medals and certificates that had been destroyed or inadvertently lost. In one case, initial issue was made in 1904 to a family that finally developed pride in their dead and wished to honor them.<sup>18</sup>

These monuments are not the only ones present in Rhodesia. There is quite a fine system of historic monuments spread across the country, in almost all cases paid for by public or private subscription. Among other things, these monuments are dedicated to and/or located at the 1896 Rebellion, Rhodes' Indaba, Moffat, seven of the 1896 forts, Livingstone, Rhodes, and the dead of the 1896 Rebellion, World War I and World War II. The Ndebele and Mashona are not left out as there are monuments to both tribes, to Mzilikazi and Lobengula, and others located at numerous archeological sites from the two tribes. Also situated in the Matopo Hills is

a memorial garden kept by a group called the Memorable Order of the Tin Hat, or MOTH. Membership in this group is open to former soldiers with valid combat experience. They have "headquarters" in the large towns, much like our V.F.W., the walls of which are festooned with military memorabilia. Most of their active program concerns maintenance of monuments and participation in assorted veterans' activities.

Awareness of the history of Rhodesia, and its military history especially, is at a fairly high level, not only among the MOTH but among the general citizenry. The citizen's grounding in history upon graduation from "high school" is complete, though general in nature. An organization called the Rhodesian Pioneers and Early Settlers' Society (see Figure 29) helps keep the process alive with assorted public events and the publishing of the historical magazine "Rhodesiana."

Another indicator of the awareness of history in Rhodesia is the content of libraries. Public libraries have a heavy emphasis on history, with an extensive selection of books and numerous displays designed to generate public interest. Interviews with librarians indicate that the response on the part of the public is quite good.<sup>19</sup> Private libraries are even more impressive. Those surveyed invariably contain many books on Rhodesia, Rhodesian history and biographies

of Rhodesian personalities. Books on these subjects, regardless of the size of the library, numbered at least ten and in some cases exceeded 100!<sup>20</sup> Over four thousand families and businesses have also subscribed to the entire reprint series being done by Books of Rhodesia. This series alone is on its 55th volume. Sales of individual copies of the reprint series, plus other Rhodesian history books, is brisk and constant in the major bookstores.<sup>21</sup>

Does this awareness of history constitute a sense of the heritage which the history contains? Contact, the most popular book published in Rhodesia,<sup>22</sup> has a section called "The Warrior Heritage." This section briefly surveys Rhodesian history and concludes that Rhodesians have been bequeathed the heritage of a warrior. Unfortunately neither "warrior" nor "heritage" are defined. Rhodesian history itself does show that Rhodesians have a heritage, one that is composed of two portions. The intangible portion concerns the human qualities of courage and aggressiveness. Methods of employing technology (weapons) and technique (forts, scouting, etc.) in warfare in Rhodesia are some of the tangible or practical components of the Rhodesian heritage. Other practical components are unified organization and cooperation of forces in prosecution of a war. All components of the Rhodesian heritage

are applicable in the current war. Do the people sense this heritage, and do they make good use of it?

## CHAPTER IV

### Endnotes

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2. Railway Museum Archives, Bulawayo, Summary of Railroad Development, Inspection, 30 June 1979.
3. John Lovett, Contact (Salisbury: Galaxie Press, 1977) pp. 16-19.
4. Peter Gibbs, The Right of the Line (Salisbury: Kingston's Ltd., 1974), pp. 165-166; Lovett, Contact p. 32; Peter Joyce, Anatomy of a Rebel (Salisbury: Graham Publishing Co., 1974), pp. 244-245.
5. Joyce, Anatomy, pp. 246-247.
6. Lovett, Contact, pp. 20-25; Joyce, Anatomy, pp. 48-51; J.F. MacDonald, The War History of Southern Rhodesia 1939-45 (Bulawayo: Books of Rhodesia, 1975), p.11; Midlands Museum, Gwelo, Inspection, 15 August 1979.
7. Joyce, Anatomy, pp. 72-74; Sir Roy Welensky, Welensky's 4,000 Days (London: Collins, 1964), pp. 140-143.
8. Joyce, Anatomy, pp. 72-80; Welensky, Days, pp. 109-124; Lovett, Contact, p. 32.
9. It is interesting that one of Welensky's back benchers, a twice wounded, three times shot down, ace Spitfire pilot (No. 237 Squadron) named Ian Smith was instrumental in splitting Sithole and Muzorewa from the terrorists in 1963 and bringing them into the legitimate political process.
10. Welensky, Days, pp. 63-70, 124-135; F.R. Metrowich, African Freedom Annual 1977 (Sandton: South African Freedom Foundation, 1977), pp. 4-7.

11. Lovett, Contact, pp. 32-33; Joyce, Anatomy, pp. 249-260.
12. Lovett, Contact, pp. 37-41; Metrowich, Freedom, pp. 4-7.
13. Lovett, Contact, pp. 41-43; Author's presence during the fall of Mozambique and siege of Laurencio Marques, 8 to 19 September 1974.
14. O'Reilly, Pursuit, pp. 84, 109-111.
15. Wilson Display, National Museum of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, Inspection, 22 July 1979; Site of the Shangani Memorial, Inspection, 31 July 1979.
16. O'Reilly, Pursuit, p. 166; Cary, Time, pp. 166-168; Site of Malindidzimu, Matopos, Inspection, 1 July 1979; Site of Zimbabwe Ruins, Inspection, 9 August 1979.
17. Cary, Time; Alexander Fullerton, The White Men Sang (London: John Davies, 1958); Interview, X, Visitors Section, Bulawayo City Hall, 2 July 1979.
18. B 1/7/2 British South Africa Company Correspondence with P.H. Sarril, W. Graham, and relatives of A.B. Kirton, a member of Wilson's patrol.
19. Queen Victoria Memorial Library, Salisbury, Inspection 14 August 1979; Bulawayo City Hall Library, Bulawayo, Inspection, 17 August 1979; School of Infantry Library, Gwelo, Inspection, 6-8 August 1979.
20. Survey of the personal libraries of Ian Henderson, Alan Henderson, D.W.B. Nicholas, Don Cowie, Bruce Calder, Angus van Jaarsveldt, Clive Stockil, and Trevor Edwards.
21. Interview, X, Manager, Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, 1 August 1979; Interview, Mr. Dow, Kingston's Booksellers, Salisbury, 16, 18, 19 July 1979; Interview, Manager, Atlas Books, Salisbury, 13 August 1979; Interview, Manager, Sable Books, Salisbury, 13 August 1979; Interview, Manager, Lyn's Stationers and Book Exchange, Salisbury, 20 July 1979.
22. Interview, Mr. Dow, 16, 18, 19 July 1979.

## CHAPTER V

### INGENUITY IS NEVER OUT OF STYLE

Frontier people have always had to improvise to survive. This axiom is no less true for the Rhodesians, though they had a good base from which to start. The industry of Rhodesia was expanded to the detriment of the other two colonies during the days of the Federation. By 1960, 11½ of all iron and cement produced in Africa was produced in Rhodesia.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, Zambia and Malawi were being torn by strife; and what little organized society there was, the white large-scale farmer, was destroyed. Upon independence, the economies of Zambia and Malawi collapsed into a barter system and subsistence farming. Since Angola and Mozambique had been systematically plundered by the Portuguese and were not lost to black nationalism until 1974, Rhodesia was in an initial position of vast economic superiority.

In such a position sanctions against Rhodesia, as imposed by Harold Wilson in 1965 against the Smith government, did relatively little damage. With a fledgling industry, plentiful resources (save oil, brought in by South Africa) and a vast manpower pool, sanctions actually provided incentive and protection.

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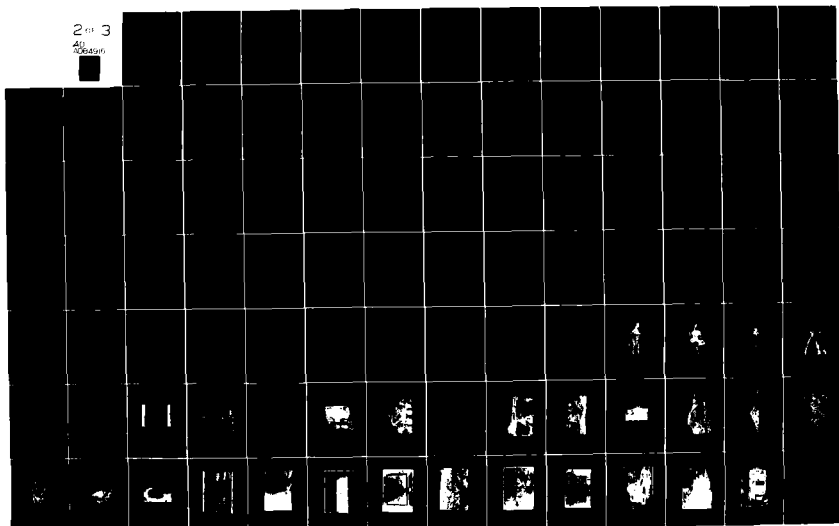
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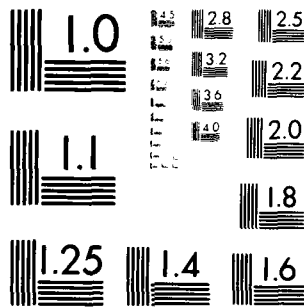
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MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART  
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A

Rhodesia rapidly became self-sufficient in everything except petroleum products and heavy, high-technology manufactured goods. By contrast, Zambia, to this day, manufactures exactly nothing and even imports her matches and toilet paper. Most imports, strangely enough, come from the Republic of South Africa over the Rhodesian Railways.<sup>2</sup>

Under impetus such as the war, Rhodesian ingenuity was not long in rising to the surface. One of the first areas to receive attention was that of armored vehicles. Rhodesia had none of her own, save for a few four-wheeled British Ferrets mounting a .30 caliber machine gun. Though armored vehicles in the sense of tanks were not essential, there was a drastic requirement for an armored vehicle that offered protection against mines. Being simple, cheap and not precipitating face-to-face combat, mines were used by the terrorists from the start. Ingenious inventors began using readily available Rhodesian sheet iron and steel, coupled with the then currently existing vehicles, to produce hybrid armored cars. First of these hybrids was the mine-proofed Land Rover. Steel plates were placed on top of and behind the front wheel wells, across the firewall, under the cab and behind the cab seat. Dual transverse roll bars connected the plates behind the seat to the top of the wheel well, and the cab was fitted with seat belts to

keep the occupants from being bounced out.

Mine-proofed Land Rovers worked well, but as mines increased in size, occupants of the cab began to have problems with ruptured fuel tanks. Rear passengers rarely escaped injury in a rear wheel detonation. Bed armor and rubber baffles made from old tire carcasses were added. Mines gradually increased still further in size, which caused a distinct split in types of vehicles manufactured. Some companies continued to upgrade Land Rovers while others decided to build vehicles from the ground up. Companies in this latter group represented a considerable change, for it was the first time that Rhodesia manufactured heavy goods for herself. The first of these vehicles was named the Leopard. It consists of a frame made from structural steel with a wheel bogie at front and rear. The front bogie provides steering and each wheel is designed to blow off as a unit, thereby absorbing the force of the mine explosion (see Figure 30). In a rear wheel detonation, the entire bogie unit with engine and transmission is designed to shear away from the body. Due to this unit's greater weight and flat acceleration curve, the major components are normally reusable. Passengers are protected from the effects of the mines and, to some extent, from small arms fire in the drum shaped body. Though a bit top heavy and prone to roll, the Leopard

is an excellent, fuel efficient vehicle and is still in manufacture and use.

Rhodesia never had an auto plant and therefore never could, and cannot now, make the large-scale mouldings and stampings required for exterior fenders, or make high precision, large-scale engine blocks. They could, however, make all kinds of rough, but very serviceable, bodies of plate steel with seats of cloth-covered wooden slats. Stretching their precious foreign trade dollar to the limit and maximizing the efficiency of what little they could get past sanctions, the Rhodesians brought in frames and engine blocks only. Using all Rhodesian materials from that point onwards, they created a line of superb armored vehicles that has eclipsed the Leopard and the various upgraded vehicles. Every firm produces its own variation and they go by many names, all taken from animals. Most numerous are the Tusker-Kudu-Rhino series and the Puma-Hippo series. Vehicles of the first series are made from the standard Land Rover, long wheel base frame. On some models, Tuskers particularly, dual wheels are added in the rear for crosscountry stability. Otherwise the normal frame with engine and drive train is retained. Some reinforcement and adapter brackets and rods are added, while the gas tank is moved to mid-frame and mounted with shear bolts. The basic vehicle thus created is then surmounted

with either a Rhino, Kudu or Tusker body. Tuskers have a drum-like roll bar cage, covered with tumble screens, with a steel body positioned in the middle. Rhinos are a little more slab sided than Tuskers, and lack the tumble screens, yet they generally carry more people (see Figures 31 and 32). Kudus are lighter than the others and have a slat style arrangement of sandwich (two, spaced layers) type armor. As a general class these vehicles do well against mines (though the vehicle itself, lacking blow-off parts, suffers a little greater damage than a Leopard) and provide a reasonable degree of protection against small arms fire. This latter characteristic is maximized in the Tusker. As their name implies, the tumble screens of the Tusker serve to decelerate, break up, and tumble small arms projectiles so that they hit the main armor in a destabilized condition. The main armor, while relatively thin, is then proof against the degraded projectiles.

Being made on the Land Rover long wheel base frame, the Tusker family offers one other significant advantage. A farmer may drive his Land Rover into town, pay the paltry sum of \$1,500 to \$7,000, depending on what he wants, and get back a Tusker family vehicle, on his frame, along with the return of his Land Rover body. Many farmers do this, saving the Land Rover body for the day when things "right themselves" and driving the

Tusker in the meantime. Figure 33 shows a "proper" gentleman farmer ready for a trip into town driving his Tusker, loaded with his Guard Force. Such things are common sights in Rhodesia today and a close look will reveal that, often as not, the shotgun or automatic rifle toting driver is the farmer's wife.

Both the Puma and the Hippo are made from two to five ton "goods lorries." On the Puma (see Figure 34) a small armored cab is substituted for the regular cab and the bed is reinforced and built up with double layered plates. Tumble screens are not required as the armor is proof against small arms due to its thickness. Though the bed lacks any human comforts and induces severe cases of rider fatigue, it is a safe place to ride and, with the exception of a hand grenade attack, constitutes an excellent moving fort.

In all cases the occupants of these armored vehicles, save for the driver, fire their weapons "over the top," thereby exposing their head and shoulders. A formal attempt was made to capitalize on Rhodesian manufacturing techniques in order to produce a true fighting vehicle. This resulted in the Hippo (see Figure 35). The armor of the Hippo is shaped so as to present a sloping face to both small arms fire and mine detonations. This, coupled with the thickness of the armor and bullet-proof glass, makes it proof against small arms. The driver and vehicle

commander sit side by side so the commander may control the vehicle without a headset or intercommunications system, yet he still has direct access to all the troops in the rear. Back to back rows of bench seats allow the troops to face outward, while firing ports and vision blocks allow them to fire without exposing themselves. Roll bars and a canvas top provide security against vehicular accidents and hand grenades. All in all, the Hippo is an excellent fighting vehicle and well adapted to its environment. Its features are the doctrinal equivalent of those found on the latest NATO and Warsaw Pact vehicles.

Development of the up-graded mine-proof Land Rover continued parallel with all the aforementioned developments but has never really been overly popular. Employment of tumble screens, all-round armor, roll bars, bullet-proof glass and the like has given the converted Land Rover a high degree of protection (see Figure 36). Further, its low conversion cost of \$600 to \$1500 is most attractive. Unfortunately, the up-graded vehicle suffers from a few problems. The weight of the armor, coupled with the existing body, heavily overloads the vehicle and restricts it to improved or paved roads. Maintenance of the engine is difficult, for access to it is a problem, and it tends to overheat, thereby inducing failure. Lastly, the vehicle resembles a

steel coffin for the occupants. They cannot fight from within the vehicle and must either drive away, trusting to luck, or dismount and fight.

In addition to civilian use, all of these vehicles are used by all branches of government. In some cases they are used to transport people and sensitive items in safety. The Army and other organizations with military missions use the Tusker and Puma families of vehicles for combat. Units equipped with them have a high degree of mobility, even if they cannot crash through the trees. Compared to foot-mobile terrorists, these units can carry more weapons and ammunition and can fight from the protection of the vehicles. This is a significant advantage and helps to conserve lives.

Though other more advanced vehicles, especially of the imported frame, Rhodesian body types, are in various stages of development, the Tusker and Puma family vehicles illustrate the point. Rhodesians are a frontieering, resourceful people. Given vehicles and sheet iron they will create something, just as they did at Mazoe, that provides protection and transportation.<sup>3</sup>

In the field of small arms the Rhodesians are no less resourceful. Their Army and other organized forces are generally equipped with the FN-FAL or the G-3 automatic rifle. Civilians have had to protect themselves with whatever weapons they have had on hand.

At any social gathering one sees a hodge podge of weapons possessed by the local citizens. Population increases, along with the duration of the current problems, have created quite a demand for additional small arms. Many people attempt to fill this demand, perhaps the best and most reliable being Tommy Steele.

Headquartered on Main Street in Bulawayo, Tommy Steele now produces a weapon that is ideal for the Rhodesian civilian. Chambered for the common 9mm Parabellum cartridge, Mr. Steele's TS III uses extended length magazines (made by shaping bits of auto bodies over a mandrel) which also work in the Browning 9mm pistol. Barrels and bolts are made by turning and drilling sections of broken, automobile axle, half-shafts. Receivers are made from tubular, structural steel that is shaped on another mandrel while smaller parts are made from spring leaves, gears or whatever other quality bits of steel happen to be handy (see Figure 37). The resulting weapon is a high-quality, fine-looking, reliable 9mm carbine (see Figure 38). Without belaboring the point, it is obvious that Rhodesians consider an efficiency in the use of resources, bordering on parsimony, to be an integral part of their program for self-sufficiency and industrialization. Their economic management board (much like our industrialization boards of World War II) assisted in making machine tools

available to Mr. Steele but forced him to make his weapons from what would be regarded as scrap anywhere else.<sup>4</sup>

Hand-held firearms are not the only area where Rhodesians have improvised weapons. Their armored vehicles provide a high level of protection, but, in the event of ambush, particularly if one is in an up-graded Land Rover, other weapons are needed. Specifically, a means of delivering a large volume of suppressive fire against the ambushers is required. The "holy water sprinkler" is designed to do this, thereby increasing the chances of driving away from the ambush without receiving a disabling shot in the engine or drive train. Various versions exist but they are all made from short sections of gas pipe, chambered for 12 gauge shotgun shells, and mounted on the roofs of vehicles in such a manner that they can be discharged by the occupants. Some models are welded to luggage carriers and have three or four barrels on each side firing "broadside" style. One of the most popular models is a stationary drum-like affair, sprouting three layers of twelve barrels each, with the barrels of each layer pointing round in a circle. Inside the cab there is a safety lever and a crank handle mounted in the roof. Upon activation of the safety, a turn of the handle is all that is required to discharge each

layer in succession. When properly loaded and fired, this "holy water sprinkler" produces a large volume of fire and has proven its ability to break ambushes.<sup>5</sup>

As might be imagined, Rhodesia is also short of aircraft. People who possess private aircraft are normally enrolled in the Reserve Air Wing. When on call up they fly their own aircraft, acting as spotters and trackers. Many of these people are frustrated because when they see the enemy they must "orbit" and call armed elements to the scene. A few have done something about the situation. Lyn Roberts, owner of a single engine, underwing Beechcraft, is one of them. He obtained two M1919 Browning air cooled machine guns and some scrap feed chutes from a wrecked World War II trainer. Using the cut and try method he designed, built and installed on his aircraft an in-wing ammunition reservoir and a single gun under-wing pylon for each wing. His design retains the expended brass for reloading and includes provision for independently zeroing each weapon. Roberts mounted a sight on his instrument panel and zeroed the weapons for that sight. When flying Reserve Air Wing, Roberts no longer has to wait for armed assistance. Constant practice sharpened his skill to such a fine edge that he has a recorded kill, before witnesses, on a running wild dog from 900 feet slant range. His enthusiasm for the aircraft is high and

he now monitors emergency radio nets even when flying on private business. A call for assistance or a spotting report is never ignored by Mr. Roberts. He takes delight in putting pressure on the enemy.<sup>6</sup>

Such evidence suggests that the Rhodesians certainly live up to the tangible or practical components of their heritage. Parallels between the Mazoe wagonette and Tuskers and Pumas are obvious. Looking at the TS III, the "holy water sprinkler" and Lyn Roberts, Rhodesian pragmatic aggressiveness is evident. These people are employing logical thought to milk existing technology and available resources of every possible advantage. Much as the Lee-Netford .303 in the 1896 Rebellion gave the Company troops an advantage over the rebels, these twentieth-century innovations are putting modern Rhodesians in a position such that they can cause maximum damage to the enemy at a minimum exposure to risk for themselves.

A deeper look shows still another link to their heritage. Though under sanctions for fourteen years and fighting a large war, their economy is still strong, their currency has not been debased. Only through unified and efficient organization of the public and private sector can such things be done. The Rhodesian economic management board is responsible for preservation of the economy. Their duties range from use efficiency of

privately owned machine tools to Customs. With such effectiveness there can be little doubt that their organization is excellent.<sup>7</sup>

Considering vehicles, weapons and the economy, Rhodesians live up to their heritage. The descendants of those who armored the wagonette at Mazoe have heard the call and answered it. The sons of those who carried the fight to the enemy with an intelligent blend of technology and aggressiveness surely sense the presence of their fathers. The lessons of unified organization have not been lost on those whose responsibilities include the economy. Elements of the tangible and practical heritage are alive and well. It only remains to be seen if the flesh and will are as strong as the Rhodesian steel.

## CHAPTER V

### Endnotes

1. Gordon Wolstenholme, ed. Man and Africa (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1965), pp. 302-312.
2. Interview, N. Edwards, 24 June 1979; Interview, T. Edwards, 24 June 1979; Interview, X, Retired Engineer, Rhodesian Railways, Binga, 8 July 1979; Interview, Alex Inglesby, Minister for Information, Salisbury, 14 August 1979; "Auxiliaries: Forces Stamp Out Bandits," The Herald (21 July 1979), Salisbury; "Terror Raid in Fort Victoria," The Herald (3 August 1979), Salisbury; Metrowich, Freedom, pp. 50, 53, 60.
3. Interview, Cpt. McKenzie, 6 August 1979; Interview, C/Sgt. A. Rumble, 7 August 1979; Interview, Allan Henderson, 26 June 1979; Interview, Peter van der Westhuizen, Contract Soldier, Doddieburn, 28 June 1979; Interview, X, Maintenance Foreman, Commissioner's Shop, Binga, 10 July 1979; Interview, X, Designer, Zambesi Coachworks, Ltd., Bulawayo, 16 August 1979; Interview, X, Contract Soldier, en route Bulawayo, 21 July 1979; Salisbury Industries, Ltd., Salisbury, inspection, 13 August 1979; Zambesi Coachworks, Ltd., Bulawayo, inspection, 16 August 1979.
4. Interview, Tommy Steele, Gunsmith, Bulawayo, 1, 16 August 1979; Interview, Phil Farmer, Shop Owner, Bulawayo, 16 August 1979; Inspection of TS III; Bulawayo Armory, Bulawayo, Inspection, 1, 16 August 1979.
5. Interview, X, Manager, Tod's Hotel, 30 June 1979 concerning ambush on West Nicholson Road, 29 June 1979; Inspection of four such devices.
6. Interview, Lyn Roberts, 27 June and 1 August 1979; Interview, Dan Landry, Rancher, Matetsi, 22 June 1979; Interview, A. van Jaarsveldt, 13 July 1979; Interview, Rupert van der Riet, Crocodile Rancher, Siabuwa, 10 July 1979; Inspection of Mr. Roberts' aircraft, 27 June 1979.

7. Interview, A. Inglesby, 14 August 1979. The name "economic management board" is a pseudonym. The real body, its make-up and its methods are strictly secret. The pseudonym is approved and the general areas of activity named are correct.

CHAPTER VI  
BUT THE FLESH IS WEAK...

History, as a subject area, receives little emphasis in the Rhodesian Army. In order to pass examinations for promotion to major, every captain takes a written test on a military campaign, the subject of which is provided him prior to the examination. Proper preparation of the officer for this system starts in his officer cadet training. History is part of the cadet curriculum for only three days out of a fifty-five week course, and most of this focuses on Army methodology rather than on history itself. The staff of the school picks a subject area for each class that goes through the school. This area is never the Rhodesian Wars. In all cases (and also for examinations for promotion), the cadets study either the Arab-Israeli Wars, Dien Bien Phu, or the North African or Italian Campaigns of World War II. They examine these campaigns for planning, execution and results, and then prepare a briefing comparing staff doctrine with the staff work actually done. As a consequence, the focus is narrow and the officers never extrapolate the lessons into daily activities or into motivational factors.

History is not used as a part of the indoctrination of officers. As do the British, the Rhodesians rely heavily on the Regiment as a group to motivate the officers. Officers are taught the traditions of the Regiment, both in cadet school and upon arrival in the Regiment by the senior 1st Lieutenant. These traditions center around the formalities of the Regimental Mess. Officers spend a great deal of time in the mess, and the system fosters social and personal ties among officers. It is these ties (peer pressure, if you will) that the Rhodesian Army relies upon for the self-discipline and motivation of the officer. Of all the officers spoken to, though they all had some personal knowledge of history, only one would state that he used his knowledge as an officer.<sup>1</sup>

Policy makers in the Armed Services of Rhodesia express concern over this narrow focus on the part of the officer corps. They are aware of a need to stimulate thought and discussion and of the value of a knowledge of history. However, they make no active effort in this area, saying that the war creates a lack of time for the officers. On only one occasion, about three years ago, did higher headquarters attempt to mold or indoctrinate their officers. A copy of Professor Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" was duplicated and distributed. This contemporary theory on motivation

emphasizes the group and the individual's position within it. No follow-up action was taken on the distribution of this theory, though, it being intended merely as food for thought. Other than this one incident, higher headquarters has left officer affairs to the Regiment. There is no program at all concerning history.<sup>2</sup>

Among the men, the story is much the same. As citizens they are reasonably aware of history. As soldiers they are motivated by peer pressure and by the Regiment. They do not see history as a motivator or as a useful instructional tool. No Non-Commissioned Officer stated that he thought of, or used, history on a day-to-day basis or in combat. They said that they remembered their Regiment (see Figure 39) and their peers, and looked to the example of their officers.<sup>3</sup>

In a terrorist war such as the Rhodesians are fighting, the times when contact is had with the enemy are, from the government point of view, short, infrequent, and random. Established counter-terrorist doctrine decrees that government forces must be aggressive, that they must seek the contact. This principle is emphasized by the Army, and they do well in this respect. Almost every regular interviewed was anxious to contact the enemy. Their high kill ratios show that when they do gain contact, they acquit themselves well. Yet this

effort on the part of the Regular Army does not result from any awareness of a warrior heritage. It is the consequence of factors which seem to operate in a vacuum that is totally divorced from the intangible components of aggressiveness contained within the Rhodesian heritage.

Unfortunately the Army consists of only four battalions, the Special Air Service, the Rhodesian Light Infantry (RLI), and the 1st and 2nd Rhodesian African Rifles. In addition to these there are four company-size units, Grey's Scouts (horse cavalry, see Figure 40), Selous' Scouts (ranger-style light infantry), the Armored Car Troop and the Artillery Battery. Besides these Regulars, the Army controls a number of Reserve units and Independent Companies. These consist of men on call-up with a smattering of seconded regular officers. Whenever more than one Army unit operates in an area (normally a District), all units are subordinated to a single, designated Army officer. This officer, in addition to commanding his own troops, controls the activities of the subordinated units.

Most of the troops in the field at any one time are not Regulars but are troops on call-up. After a short period of training and active duty, non-Regulars are assigned to Reserve units and go back to their normal civilian jobs. Based upon need, these units are then

"called up" for active combat duty on cycles that vary from a high of ten weeks at home to six weeks in the field, to a low of six weeks at home to six weeks in the field. When on call-up, these units fall under normal Army chain of command and supply systems.<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately, the Army represents a minority of the armed bodies of men in government employ in the field at any one time. On one day in July 1979, three bodies of armed men traveled the Siabwa-Kamativi Road, an improved dirt road that traverses an operational area. Each of these bodies of men traveling the road numbered no less than twenty, were armed with automatic weapons and were traveling in armored vehicles. None of them were Army, and none of them had any interest in finding and fighting terrorists. One group was BSAP, one was Internal Affairs (now Home Affairs) and one was National Parks.<sup>5</sup>

Each of these three major groups has a different composition and mission. The British South Africa Police, in addition to their "white gloves" police roles, have a mounted troop (like Grey's Scouts), a Police Anti-Terrorist Unit (something like Selous' Scouts), a Support Unit (organized and equipped almost like the RLI), a marine wing (more on them later), an active reserve (the majority of their manpower, call-up types like the Army who serve as police in lieu of Army

and may serve anti-terrorist or "white gloves" functions when on call-up), and "Dad's Army" (a group of males aged 56 to 65). Of course, all these people have ranks like "constable" and report to, and receive pay from, police channels that go up to BSAP Headquarters in Salisbury (see Figure 41). Such a diverse "fruitcake" unit would be incomplete without topping, and the BSAP has it. Per official policy, the Support Unit has no quartermaster, medics or other support. Each man is paid an allowance and expected to furnish his own food, even when on "campaign in the field"!<sup>6</sup>

Home Affairs does little better. This outfit basically consists of fifty-four District Commissioners (DC's) who rule over a pre-designated geographical district. Their mission is to provide health care, education, veterinary services, election control and community development for the vast mass of the population. In addition, they have some police function in areas designated "Tribal Trust Lands."<sup>7</sup> They are assisted at the district level by Assistant District Commissioners (ADC's), District Assistants (DA's) and District Security Assitants (DSA's). ADC's and DA's assist with primary functions while DSA's are paid guards for the former whenever they go into the bush. District headquarters are generally well-defended and comfortable affairs and contain relatively extensive motor pools of armored

vehicles. A visit to any of them shows dozens of DA's and DSA's literally sleeping on their arms, normally in the shade of a bunker or a little-used armored vehicle. Official policy is that the ADC's, DA's and DSA's are not to seek the contact but that they are to carry out Home Affairs jobs in their districts. There is no extensive, formal training for DSA's (the DC can further train them as he sees fit), yet they are armed and equipped like infantry.<sup>8</sup>

National Parks has an organization much like Home Affairs but on a smaller scale, and restricted to those areas where game management is required. Each National Park station has a number of armored vehicles and groups of game rangers and game scouts who are also armed and equipped like infantry. Their job is to manage parks and to control poaching which serves the added purpose of denying terrorists part of their food supply. National Parks, like Home Affairs, does not have call-ups within the organization but, unlike the Home Affairs, the individuals are liable for call-up to the Army or BSAP. Both Home Affairs and National Parks are paid for, and report to, separate chains of command that go up to their respective headquarters in the government in Salisbury.<sup>9</sup>

With all these armed men running loose the coordination problem is staggering. The offices of Combined

Operations Headquarters (ComOps) contain all sorts of "wiring diagrams" showing all kinds of units and who is responsible to whom for what. Gaily colored maps decorate the walls. Arrows, pins and colored yarn are festooned about them like tinsel on a Christmas tree.<sup>10</sup> Officially, everybody knows what everybody else is doing. But ComOps controls only the Army and the Air Forces. They cannot touch anything or anyone in the BSAP, Home Affairs, or National Parks without going to the Ministerial level and securing a decision from the Prime Minister.

Of course this problem has been considered, and a solution, the JOC or Joint Operations Center, has been instituted. Mr. P.K. van der Byl told a group of graduating officer cadets, "From now on one of your innumerable tasks will be proper and effective cooperation with the other services--the Air Force, the Police and all of those who make up our JOC system of command. I commend this for your attention because it is by means of the excellent cooperation that exists between all the Services that our armed forces have been as spectacularly successful in the terrorist war as they have been."<sup>11</sup>

"Excellent cooperation" and "JOC system of command"--what fine words they are, and what tidy pictures they conjure up in the mind. Departure from Salisbury and travel through the countryside, however, gives one the distinctly uneasy feeling that Salisbury has not the

faintest idea of what it is talking about. The JOC coincides with Home Affairs District Headquarters. In all cases there are daily JOC meetings which include the DC, National Parks, BSAP chief, Senior Army commander, Senior Air or Reserve Air commander, and commanders of any special BSAP units in the area. At Binga, the police marine wing and army marine wing are included.<sup>12</sup> To the experienced (or jaundiced) eye, their JOC "system" might be considered a bit unwieldy. Realization that the JOC is not a command body, has no senior decision making authority and relies on voluntary cooperation (like the United Nations) removes all doubt: the JOC is unwieldy.<sup>13</sup> One day in March 1978, the Binga DC went fishing, in daylight, on Lake Kariba. The marine wing spotted him, was ordered to fire by the radio duty officer at JOC and proceeded to do so, sinking the boat and killing their own DC.<sup>14</sup> Though this story of JOC failure is severe it is not uncommon. JOC incompetence is rampant.

Those at the higher headquarters, from Mr. van der Byl on down, who think that their system works are deceiving themselves. Neat lines on a map or chart do not make neat performance in the field. The problems Forbes had with his Mobile Column were not wasted upon the Company, for, in 1896, in cooperation with the Imperial Government, they established unified command

and unified effort toward a central goal. It is unfortunate that the problems of 1893 and the solutions of 1896 are apparently wasted upon the government in Salisbury in the 1970's.

Employment of the old adage "the worst is yet to come" is all too apt. Exposure to the JOC only begins to prepare the observer for what he is to see. The police, Home Affairs and call-up troops do not pull their loads. They feel no responsibility and they worry more about evening chow, trips to the pub, and going home next week than they do about coming to grips with the enemy. For example, the road patrol of the British South Africa Police from Pandamatenga to the 390 peg on the Victoria Falls-Bulawayo Road (see Figure 42) is basically a hop from farmhouse to pub to farmhouse for endless rounds of tea and beer. The patrol, regardless of who its individual members may be, has absolutely no desire to do anything whatsoever. Despite the fact that there are five whites plus four to seven blacks, all armed with automatic weapons and mounted in two Kudus, they claim that they are neither equipped nor trained to do any fighting. When asked about the heritage of the BSAP, an irregular light cavalry regiment equipped and intended to fight,<sup>15</sup> they replied that it was their job to direct traffic and that the Army should go find the terrorists and fight them. Residents in the

area acknowledge that the police are worthless and provide little protection.<sup>16</sup>

Performance in Home Affairs, despite some bright spots, is not much better. The Binga District, and especially the ADC, David Brinker, presented a fine appearance. They knew exactly what was going on in their district and accomplished their mission fairly well.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, in the Lupane District, no schools or hospitals were in operation and no one had the faintest idea what was going on. The Home Affairs people there were convinced that the terrorists were everywhere and that to travel to certain parts of the district was to invite certain death. When asked why they did not go protect their people, they replied that was not their job and that the Army should do it. According to the map, a major power line ran through their district. When asked why it had not been destroyed by the "numerous" terrorists, they could not answer; but they prayed the line stayed in operation for, if not, they might have to go out and help fix it. Further, the ADC stated that since it was so dangerous in his district, he was invoking his powers and refusing permission for anyone to travel through it. It is apparent that these people hid from imaginary enemies behind the barbed wire of the compound and that the DSA's were mere "imperial guards" who protected the DC on infrequent, lightning-fast,

road bound "inspections." Needless to say, the situation was not that bad and the populace of the district were not fooled as to what support they got from their legal government.<sup>18</sup>

This attitude of "let the Army do it" pervades almost all non-Regulares throughout Rhodesia. Even those who are designated as "reaction sticks" leave a bit to be desired. On 26 June 1979 an illustrative incident occurred near Tod's Hotel at the 200 peg on the Bulawayo-Beitbridge road (see Figure 43). The hotel is used as a stopping point for the convoys on the road. These convoys are usually broken down into "light" and "heavy" serials, and each serial is escorted by two or more Datsun machine gun trucks. A steel plate and tumble screen turret, mounting a .303 caliber Browning machine gun, is fixed on bearings in the bed of the truck. Total complement of a truck is three, gunner, driver and shotgun rider (see Figure 44). As the northbound light convoy pulled in on the morning of the 26th, no alarms or distress calls were seen or heard and the radio leader was silent. As soon as they pulled out, the southbound light and the northbound heavy pulled in, the former continuing onwards in a few moments. Again, there were no radio calls or any alarm or emergency. At about the same time, a bus from the Shu-Shine Bus Company came in from the south and

fell in with the rear of the heavy convoy.

Within minutes Brian Krueger and four others in a Tusker pulled in, and were stopped by a black on the bus, whom Krueger knew. The black told him that less than five minutes before a gang of terrorists had robbed the bus at the 206 peg, six kilometers south of the hotel. Despite the fact that Krueger is blind in one eye, the group in the Tusker (three whites, two blacks, all heavily armed) made the decision to seek the contact. They sent a report in on the Acree Alert Radio mounted in the Tusker and went charging down the road. Orders immediately came back to wait at the hotel for the reaction stick from West Nicholson, a town situated some 18 kilometers to the north.<sup>19</sup>

While waiting, the group discovered that the north-bound heavy convoy escorts were not concerned. The escorts countered all questions with the statement that since their convoy was safe (the Shu-Shine bus rarely travels in convoy) they were doing a good job. After a few more minutes the northbounds pulled out and the group waited another two hours and twenty minutes for the arrival of the reaction stick. Upon their arrival, the entire flock moved south in short order and found the point where the bus had been robbed.

Billy Howells, <sup>20</sup>the stick tracker, Krueger and one other man checked the area and found the tracks of

fourteen terrorists. The terrorists had stopped the bus and pulled it about twenty yards off the road; however, they had failed to pull it completely into the roadside vegetation. A man standing in the tracks of the bus could plainly see the road surface. Since the bus had pulled in after the northbound heavy convoy, by at most two minutes, the northbounds had to have seen the bus, yet they did nothing. Determined not to let the terrorists get away, Howells told the stick leader the composition of the terrorists group and Krueger, the manager of the ranch land on which the bus had been robbed and into which the terrorists were fleeing, delivered a terrain analysis and prediction of the probable movement of the terrorists. The reaction stick consisted of four armored vehicles, eleven whites and twenty-three blacks, more than enough, even without the Krueger group, to deal with the problem. Further, Lyn Roberts flew up, cleared the road by buzzing it, landed and offered his services.<sup>21</sup>

From that point onward, the stick leader and six other white members of the reaction stick demonstrated incompetence, lack of courage, and a total lack of aggressiveness. They fussed and fumed about orienting a map. When a compass was passed to the group they refused it and said they did not wish to be confused by a compass. For another hour and a half these people

debated the problem in a slipshod and inept manner. At the end of that time they decided that the terrorists had had too great a head start. They would call off any pursuit and go back to West Nicholson for "tea time." Howells rejoined the stick and they went off to the north. Roberts went back about his business, and the Krueger group went to the Doddieburn Ranch homestead. There they reorganized. Peter van der Westhuizen (caretaker of the homestead), another white, and three blacks from homestead Guard Force<sup>22</sup> contingent started hunting the terrorists. The following day they got within thirty minutes of the terrorists at a cattle watering station, but never caught up as the terrorists crossed the ranch and went into the tribal trust land beyond.<sup>23</sup>

Such conduct on the part of non-Regulars is not unusual: it is the norm. The people guilty of it justify their conduct with excuses about lack of equipment and training. As is readily evident, they are armed and equipped at least as well as the terrorists. Their argument that they are not trained soldiers simply falls away. First, they all receive at least three weeks initial combat training plus two days redeployment training at the start of each call-up.<sup>24</sup> Secondly, how much training do you need to be a soldier? It is significant that the 1893 Ndebele War was not

fought by soldiers. Of the thirty-three men who fell with Wilson at Shangani, not a single one was a soldier! Wilson himself had no formal military training or experience. Examination of the original Victoria Rangers Attestation roll reveals that Wilson listed himself as unemployed, as did ninety-eight other men. Of the 383 total listed on the Attestation Roll, only seven listed themselves as having any military experience whatsoever. They were outnumbered by accountants, prospectors, lawyers and doctors. The only other group smaller than former soldiers was "others."<sup>25</sup> Certainly they were no body of regulars, yet they fought and died rather well. Without digressing too far, it is safe to say that the men under Wilson did well as a result of natural leadership ability on the part of Wilson and a few others, and some aggressiveness on the part of all of them. Why can a modern Rhodesian not do as well?

It must be emphasized that, in most cases, this criticism is not meant to cast aspersions on individuals. For example, how aggressive can one expect a man to be when he is told to fight people yet he gets no food and has no medic to treat his wounds? How aggressive can one be on a "fight for six weeks-go home for six weeks" cycle of musical coffins? Further, the government attempts to raise morale by broadcasting many

radio programs for the soldiers in the field. Many of these consist of open letters to, and dedications for, call-up troops. All such letters and dedications take the form of messages from family and sweethearts about home life. Advice to take no risks and to come home safe abounds. Some even suggest malingering or other nefarious activities to assure this end.<sup>26</sup>

Whether he wants to or not, the common call-up soldier or constable must occasionally expose himself to danger. The pity is that the system provides an institutional shelter for the non-aggressive who wish to avoid danger. On the lower levels such non-aggressives slowly spoil a unit like a rotten apple at the bottom of a bushel. This institutionally sheltered non-aggressiveness, when present in a leader, dulls the edge of the aggressive troops and provides social and group pressures to make them conform to a non-aggressive code of combat.

There is a popular poem in Rhodesia that appears to invoke the warrior heritage but in fact carries a more subtle and powerful meaning. It reads:

"Didn't Fight for Fun"

In World War One, when things were bad, and  
England needed men,  
We rallied to our country's flag--Rhodesians  
answered then.  
And many asked us as we went, "Whose battle  
do you fight?"  
"Our country needs us," we replied, and fought

with all our might.  
 And some came back, but hundreds not; but you  
 must understand  
 We didn't fight for fun, my lad, we fought to  
 save our land.

Two Decades Passed, and once again, the call  
 to arms went out.  
 Rhodesians answered as before--was ever there  
 a doubt?  
 Where did we go? Why everywhere! On land  
 and air and sea,  
 We fought in every battle, and we helped to  
 set men free.  
 And some came back, but thousands not; but you  
 must understand  
 We didn't fight for fun, my lad, we fought to  
 save our land.

The Years Rolled By, and once again, the battle  
 cry is made.  
 This time Rhodesians fight alone--few come to  
 our aid.  
 Both young and old, both black and white, we'll  
 keep our country free  
 And make it safe for everyone--not just for you  
 and me.  
 Yes, some will live, and some will not, but you  
 must understand  
 It isn't any fun, my lad, to fight to save our  
 land.<sup>27</sup>

This poem's last stanza holds the key. It is not  
 about warriors in tune with their heritage and carrying  
 forward, it is about those forlorn of hope. They have  
 fought for others but now, in their fight, no one fights  
 for them. Despite the fact that they are fighting  
 communist aggression, no one in the free world rallies  
 to their aid. Quite the contrary, the free world seems  
 determined (from the Rhodesian point of view) to prevent  
 Rhodesian victory or to manipulate it until the fruits  
 of victory are worthless.

Confronted with a similar situation, the Polish Cavalry rode to glory in their suicide sabre charges against Nazi tanks in 1939. The world was not there to help. The Poles perceived that their order was doomed and that they, as soldiers, were powerless to reverse the tide. In such circumstances, they had no wish to live through the future. One can respect the Poles, but cannot, by inference, expect others to do likewise. The Rhodesian may have a warrior heritage that rivals that of other people. It is to no avail, it cannot inspire men to risk death when all other factors work to deny that heritage.

## CHAPTER VI

### Endnotes

1. Interview, LTC. Charles Aust, Officer Commanding, School of Infantry, Gwelo, 7 August 1979; Interview, Lt. Marc Adams, Instructor, Cadet Wing, School of Infantry, Gwelo, 8 August 1979; Interview, LTC. K.J. Busby, Officer Commanding, Education Corps, Rhodesian Army, 16 July 1979; Interview, Major John Dawson, 2 IC, School of Infantry, Gwelo, 8 August 1979; Interview, Major Simon D. Haarhoff, Officer Commanding, Regimental Wing, School of Infantry, Gwelo, 7 August 1979; Interview, Colonel D.T. Hopkins, Retired, Salisbury, 14 August 1979; Interview, LTC. R.E.H. Lockley, Adjutant, Rhodesian Army, Salisbury, 20 July 1979; Interview, Major J.A.C. McDonald, Officer Commanding, Cadet Wing, School of Infantry, Gwelo, 7 August 1979; Interview, Captain Robert McKenzie, 1 SAS, Salisbury, 6 August 1979; Interview, Officer Cadet R.A. McLennan, School of Infantry, Gwelo, 7 August 1979; Interview, LTC. John Templar, Operations, Combined Operations, Salisbury, 16 July 1979; Interview, Lieutenant Allan R.M. Thrush, Instructor, School of Infantry, Gwelo, 8 August 1979; Class 2-79, Battle Commander's Course, School of Infantry, Gwelo, 8 August 1979.
2. Lieutenant General Peter Walls, Officer Commanding, Combined Operations, Salisbury, Interview, 14 August 1979; Interview, LTC. Lockley, 13, 14 August 1979.
3. Interview, Sergeant Wantenaar, Instructor, School of Infantry, Gwelo, 8 August 1979; Interview, C/Sgt. Allan O. Rumble, School of Infantry, Gwelo, 7 August 1979; Class 3-79, Senior Weapons Course, School of Infantry, Gwelo, 7 August 1979.
4. Interview, LTC. Lockley, 20 July 1979; Interview, LTC. Templar, 16 July 1979.
5. Observations of the author, 4 July 1979; Interview, David Brinker, Assistant District Commissioner, Binga District, 4 July 1979; Interview, Angus van Jaarsveldt, Crocodile Rancher, Binga, 4, 5 July

1979.

6. H.C.P. Anderson, Fighting Forces of Rhodesia, Vol. 3 (Salisbury: Mardon Printers, 1976), p. 11; Sally Brown, Fighting Forces of Rhodesia, Vol. 5 (Salisbury: Cent African Press Publications, 1979), p. 27. The BSAP constitutes the civil police force and is roughly equivalent to the Houston Police Department and the Texas Department of Public Safety rolled into one. "White gloves" refers to their roles in traffic management, criminal investigation, and so forth.
7. Lovett, Contact, pp. 140-147; H.C.P. Anderson, Fighting Forces of Rhodesia, Vol. 4 (Salisbury: Mardon Printers, 1977) pp. 21-29; Brown, Forces, Vol. 5, pp. 45-53.
8. Interview, Brinker, 4 July 1979; Inspection of Binga, Lupane, and Gwanda District Headquarters.
9. Interview, Billy Howells, 206 peg, Bulawayo-Beitbridge Road, 5,6 August 1977, 27 June 1979; Interview, Nigel X, Chief, Matetsi Station, National Parks, 26 July 1979; Interview, Rob Martin, Warden, National Parks, vicinity Matetsi, 23 July 1979.
10. Inspection, Combined Operations, Salisbury, 16, 19 July, 14 August 1979.
11. H.C. Anderson, Fighting Forces of Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (Salisbury: Mardon Printers, 1975), p. 7.
12. Despite their different names and the different channels through which they report, these wings use the same boats originating from the same harbor. They patrol Lake Kariba, which is the boundary with Zambia, and across which many terrorists try to sail. At the same time, Lake Kariba is a major fishing ground and tourist attraction and cannot be completely militarized.
13. Interview, X, Chief, British South Africa Police, Binga, 24, 25 July 1979; Inspection of JOC's, 9 July 1979.
14. Interview, van Jaarsveldt, 12 July 1979; Interview, Brinker, 4 July 1979; Interview, X, Maintenance Foreman, Commissioner's Shop, Binga, 10 July 1979.
15. Gibbs, Line, pp. vii, 10-12.

16. The area of the Pandamatenga Road (Matetsi) is not quite so calm as it sounds. Matetsi is a major route for terrorists coming in from Botswana and is a staging ground for attacks on the Victoria Falls-Bulawayo Road. The author broke an ambush on this road at the 393 peg. Interview, X, Constable, Panda Patrol, vicinity Matetsi, 27 July 1979; Interview, Martin, 26 July 1979; Interview, Trevor Edwards, Hotelier, Matetsi, 27 July 1979; Interview, Nauna Edwards, Housewife, 23.5 K. Pandamatenga Road, 27 July 1979; Interview, Joeff Broem, Rancher, Matetsi, 29 July 1979.
17. Interview, Brinker, 4 July 1979; Inspection, Binga District Headquarters, 4 July 1979.
18. Interview, A. van Jaarsveldt, 11 July 1979; Interview, X, District Commissioner, Lupane District, 31 July 1979; Interview, X, Assistant District Commissioner, Lupane District, 14, 22, 31 July 1979; Inspection, Lupane District. The author ignored the travel prohibition at Lupane.
19. Acree Alert is a radio system whereby every farmhouse and every farmer's vehicle in an area is permanently netted with a base station in the nearest town. It is used for reporting emergencies and in lieu of alarm clocks for morning wake up calls. A reaction stick is a quick response ready force. They are to react to all reports of contact. "Stick" can mean a force ranging in size from four to forty. Most reaction sticks are properly called by the name of the town in which they are based and from which they respond.
20. An interesting fellow who, when not called up, makes his living as an elephant culler for National Parks.
21. In this case, Roberts was flying from Beitbridge to Ft. Victoria but detoured when he heard the reported contact. Rather than fly aimlessly about and perhaps drive the terrorists under cover, Roberts flew up the road until he found the reaction stick and then landed on the road so he could make direct coordination.
22. The Guard Force is a body of blacks raised by the government. They are armed, given a bare minimum of training and parcelled out to ranches, mines and so forth. Though they have a government supervisor, they rarely see him and normally act as private soldiers for the owner of the installation they

guard. Always in short supply, they are augmented by militia and Home Guards. These latter two categories are blacks raised by local owners. The titles Home Guard and militia simply give them authority to be armed, though the former sometimes gets issued a bolt action .303.

23. Inspection by author; on the day in question, the author was waiting at Tod's for B. Krueger, joined his group and participated in the affair until its conclusion.
24. Anderson, Forces, Vol. 3, p. 15.
25. B 4/2/4 Victoria Defence Force Attestation Roll; Cary, Time, pp. 169-171; O'Reilly, Pursuit, pp. 181-188.
26. Monitor by author of "Voice of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia" on a four days per week average basis, 27 June to 19 August 1979.
27. Sydney E. Lassman, "Didn't Fight for Fun," unpublished.

## CHAPTER VII

### ...AND THE TECHNIQUE IS NOT THERE.

Rhodesia seems to abandon its warrior heritage in another area besides the intangibles of aggressiveness and courage. They also have a tangible component in their heritage that encompasses the tactics and techniques for waging war in Rhodesia.

During the 1896 Rebellion a great deal of emphasis was placed on the use of forts. These forts generally denied the enemy access to certain areas, lay astride his lines of communications or in some other way hindered him. Lt. Col. Alderson had not even departed Mashonaland before he was being criticized for his unbalanced program of emphasizing lightning patrols at the expense of forts. These patrols produced dead bodies and captured food, weapons and cattle. Yet when they moved on, the patrols left a vacuum into which the rebels quickly moved and re-established their control. All the analogies, like elephants stomping on flies, have applied to guerilla wars from Alexander in Bactria and Sogdia to Vietnam. They apply equally to the 1896 Rebellion or to Rhodesia today. The people regard the lack of staying power as weakness then and they

do so now. Theoretical disadvantages of forts, especially as regards manpower, are numerous, yet in some cases patrols alone are no substitute for them. In Rhodesia, the Army is constantly changing locations, its troops sweeping in, cleaning out areas for a few weeks and then moving on to another area which in the meantime has developed a greater problem. As soon as they depart, the terrorists come right back in and things go right back the way they were. In those few areas where "forts" are established, they are normally under Home Affairs. Since the defenders hide within these forts they do little good. To make this even worse, there are cases where blacks in developed or mixed areas were being harassed, even in protected villages, so they were sent back to their tribal trust lands. These same tribal trust lands are, in many instances, under the de facto control of the terrorists. Those people who were reliable and loyal to the government were sent to the terrorists by that very same government.

A case in point is the area to the south and east of Bulawayo. In this vast area there are a few large ranches and a great deal of tribal trust land. Not a single resident of this area could be found who had any opinion other than that the government had "written them off." Raids and patrols are infrequently staged in the tribal trust land. For the most part, these lands are

beyond the pale of government authority. The white farmers who are contiguous to the tribal lands are an embattled lot. Their fences are torn, cattle rustled, homesteads burned and workers killed or run off. Yet there is little or no government help. Whatever is available is generally wasted away by JOC incompetence. Under such conditions, the weak drift away and only the strong survive. Of the 23 ranchers and farmers on the Acree Alert net in West Nicholson in 1977, only eleven remain in 1979. In the Cashel District, only four of sixty remain.<sup>1</sup>

Where the strong do remain, the situation is not yet out of hand. Private armies spring up like weeds. Former soldiers hire out at excellent pay scales to run farm defense forces consisting of whatever Guard Force are present plus whatever blacks can be signed up as militia or Home Guards. It is significant that where a farmer demonstrates the courage to stay the Guard Force personnel rapidly develop more loyalty to, and therefore take orders from, the farmer. Defenders of farms and homesteads present an integrated front regardless of each individual's status as regards the government. Further, farmers who stay have more volunteers for militia and Home Guard from among their workers than can be accepted. With strict firearms control instituted by the government, men can be signed

up only when there is a weapon available to issue.<sup>2</sup>

Though this all sounds like a heavily armed and hotly contested area it is certainly no worse than the American frontier when Indians were present. The ranch called Doddieburn is right in the middle of the area that the government has allegedly "written off." It is bordered on two sides by tribal trust land, and on those sides they do have troubles with their fence. Yet the ranch is still stable and still produces cattle. Normal business is carried on, the cattle camps are full, dip tanks are in use, windmills and wells still work and the workers go about their business. The homestead has a few additions, such as barbed wire, an alert fence, a bunker, a few booby traps and so forth. Its main defenders are one white (Pete van der Westhuizen), four Guard Force and three militia. They have at their disposal one Tusker and enough money for reasonable quantities of explosives and ammunition. As a general rule terrorists do not stay on the ranch though they cross it frequently. As the party that robbed the Shu-Shine bus did, they normally water at a cattle camp, may take a little food and are then off without harming the workers. Cattle are not rustled as these slow the terrorists down and ensure that pursuit from the ranch will catch them. Normally cattle at Doddieburn are not slaughtered by terrorists or rustled

by indigenous people from the trust land, for the cattle owners among the blacks in the trust lands will report this to the ranch. Although the ranch, especially the homestead, has a military facade, it is really an island of stability in a troubled sea. Cost to the government, beyond the loan of a couple of weapons and some Guard Force, is absolutely nil.

As one might surmise, such a ranch is known to the terrorists and, though they lack any real organized effort, the ranch is sometimes the target of a terrorist operation. In December of 1978 and March 1979, the homestead was hit by attacks which consisted of some small arms fire during the night. Return fire drove the attackers away in each case.<sup>3</sup> In June 1979, a detailed terrain analysis was performed. Based on this, Pete van der Westhuizen up-graded the defensive fire plan. Many new items were introduced at this time, to include ranging stakes, indirect fire cards for homemade rifle grenades, punji stakes, pipe bombs and fougasse.<sup>4</sup> All of this was paid for by van der Westhuizen from his private budget. Preparations were nowhere near complete when the homestead was hit by an estimated forty terrorists armed with small arms plus two rocket launchers, a mortar and three machine guns. A brisk 45-minute affair ensued in which the attackers were treated to a severe drubbing. Unfortunately they never

penetrated the outer wire. Fence alarms as shown on the main control panel were apparently caused by bullet strikes on the wire. Therefore, with one exception, the attackers missed the pleasure of the booby traps. About 12:30 AM some terrorists with a machine gun worked themselves into a topographical weak spot in the defense. This weak spot had been discovered in the terrain analysis and had been covered with fougasse. The terrorists set up with the right side of their position about six feet in front of the trap. After its detonation, the remaining terrorists broke off the fight, dragging away three of their dead and discarding them. Blood spoor indicated that at least one other was badly wounded and it is doubtful he survived. Damage to the defense was limited to a tire and brake drum shot off the Tusker, which had not been parked in its shelter for the night. At about 11:30 AM the reaction stick from West Nicholson arrived. They promptly lost a vehicle on a mine as a result of their driving down the main ranch road before the defenders could get far enough to clear the road and assist the reaction stick in.<sup>5</sup>

Post attack intelligence indicated that the terrorists had had quite enough of Doddieburn as they normally prefer to pick on "soft" or undefended targets. The homestead has not been hit again. Appeals to the

local JOC for more weapons, Guard Force, wire, explosives or anything else to strengthen the defense were denied because of "priorities elsewhere within the district" and the fact that intelligence indicated terrorists would not come back. Not unexpectedly, the incident has become a cause celebre among the remaining farmers in the area. They feel it to be perfect justification for a policy of fort building or homestead fortification and for a projection of government power into both white and black owned land on a permanent basis. Results such as those obtained at Doddieburn were excellent from a military standpoint and, from a political standpoint, far reaching in terms of building faith in the populace.<sup>6</sup>

These results are quite in keeping with the results of the 1896 Rebellions. A fort, no matter how small or what other purpose it serves, is an indicator to all that the forces of the government intend to stay. It is a place where farmers or friendly forces can be secure. It serves as a rallying point for the local populace who would declare for the side of the government if they could be sure of protection. Nothing but good can result from the use of forts, especially considering that regular government forces are not tied down: fortified homesteads are manned by the farmer. However, in all districts checked the government

apparently discourages fortification. Clearances to buy detonators, detonator cord and certain other demolitions items are impossible to come by. Securing issue of weapons, even bolt action Lee-Enfields,<sup>7</sup> for militia or Home Guards is difficult. Yet government agencies have weapons in great quantity despite the fact that they fail to keep the bearers fully employed.<sup>8</sup>

Government forces who do attempt to contact the enemy are continually changing location. For the days or weeks that an Army unit is present, the terrorists are driven away. When the Army leaves the terrorists swoop back in. The lessons of Alderson in the Rebellions as concerns patrols and forts have been lost. Advent of the internal combustion engine and the helicopter have not changed the equation. Without the willingness to stay, or to at least track on foot until the enemy is run to earth, a ten minute reaction time might as well be ten years. When the enemy is allowed to do his work and to get away, the populace perceives the enemy as the stronger force. The tangible heritage of tactics and technique seems to have slipped away.

## CHAPTER VII

### Endnotes

1. Inspection by author; Interview, Clive Stockil, 10, 11 August 1979; Interview, X, Y, BSAP, 9 August 1979; Interview, Ollie X, 9 August 1979; Interview, Alex Inglesby, 14 August 1979; Lovett, Contact, p. 68; Nicholas Mosley, "Lonely War of the Front-Line Farmers," Scope, Vol. 14 #10 (9 Mar. 1979), Republican Press, Durban, pp. 42-49.
2. Interview, Choi, 27 June 1979; Interview, Don Cowie, 26 June 1979; Interview, John Dryden, 20 July 1979; Interview, Trevor Edwards, 25 June 1979; Interview, Elias, 27, 28 June 1979; Interview, Frank X, 27 June 1979; Interview, Nick Gahchan, 3, 31 July 1979; Interview, Allan Henderson, 17 August 1979; Interview, Dudley Nicholas, 22 July, 2, 18 August 1979; Interview, Paw-Paw, 6, 11, 12 July 1979; Interview, V, Guard Force, 28 June 1979; Interview, Rupert van der Reit, 10 July 1979; Interview, Klaus von Ludwinger, 15 July 1979; Interview, X, contract soldier, 21 July 1979; Interview, Peter van der Westhuizen, 27-30 June 1979; Interview, X, Guard Force leader, 27-30 June 1979; Interview, Y, Guard Force, 27-30 June 1979; Interview, Z, Guard Force, 27-30 June 1979; Interview, Brian Krueger, 30 June 1979; Interview, Funny Mwadi, 6 August 1979.
3. Interview, Paul Huggins, 24, 25 July 1979; Interview, Dudley Nicholas, 22 July 1979, 2 August 1979.
4. An expedient napalm land mine, normally detonated by a command link. It is made with gasoline, Ivory Snow, detonation cord, fertilizer or blasting dynamite, and railroad flares.
5. Participation by the author in the series of events.
6. Interview, Dudley Nicholas, 2, 14 August 1979; Interview, Allan Henderson, 17 August 1979; Interview, Moira X, 31 July 1979.

7. A British rifle chambered for the same .303 cartridge as the Lee-Metford.
8. Inspection of Binga, Lupane, Gwanda, Fort Victoria, Cashel Valley, Umtali and Chiredzi Districts.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FALLIBLE SOUL IN A CHARIOT OF IRON

Throughout Rhodesia, in every bar, school and meeting place, there hangs a simple pen and ink drawing of a World War II Spitfire streaking up into the clouds. Underneath the Spitfire is the bust of a pilot in flying gear. The pilot is Ian Smith and the caption is his words, "We will never surrender to the forces of darkness and evil." Without dwelling on the political side, that quiet but defiant statement is reminiscent of the spirit of John Paul Jones and Major Allan Wilson. In a country that is outwardly aware of its history, that is perhaps fitting.

It is said that those who do not study history are doomed to repeat it. Perhaps that is true. For some brilliant soul who can re-invent the wheel, the lunar lander, and win a great victory at the same time, perhaps a knowledge of history is not necessary. For the less fortunately gifted among us, the study of history can provide much useful input to decision making. The problem may lie in making the input felt. Lessons on the use and value of forts as shown in 1896 are apparently lost in Rhodesia, save for those farmers

who have knowledge of the interplay of man and the land. Organization, as bungled in 1893 and corrected in 1896, seems to have slipped by the powers that be. One can imagine the bickering and fumbling that goes on in the JOC's in order to produce such disasters as the dead District Commissioner on Lake Kariba and the lack of weapons for blacks who are in the midst of the enemy and want to fight.

How did their organization slip so badly, and where has the aggressiveness gone? Perhaps the answer lies in graduated response. This war has built up slowly over a period of fifteen years. Decisions, such as having the BSAP conduct anti-terrorist activity, may have seemed reasonable when terrorism was almost indistinguishable from common crime. In the hot war and martial law of the operational areas, such decisions are senseless. Yet the bureaucracy has an inertial resistance to change. The system has grown from a foundation made of out-dated decisions.

Graduated response is no less responsible for the sapping of courage and aggressiveness. A warrior heritage and a sudden declaration of war can cause people to volunteer for a World War II. Once in the Army, the volunteers are in for the duration and are thousands of miles from home. In that position, the volunteer will have ample opportunity to be in situations

where he must decide between his values and risk to his life. Warriors emerge when people are placed in such cauldrons.

What happens, though, when there is no sudden onset of war? What happens when there is a call-up system? What happens to the will of the fighter when four hours drive takes one from the worst of operational areas where terrorism is rampant (see Figures 20, 21 and 22) to Salisbury? In outward appearance it is almost impossible to tell that Salisbury is the capital of a country at war. There is no blackout at night nor any restriction on movement. Armed men are not present in the streets nor are war slogans or propaganda signs in evidence. Most workers, including those in ComOps, Army Headquarters and BSAP Headquarters, leave work at 4:30 or 5:00 PM. A warrior heritage is a fine thing, but by itself it will wear thin under such strain.

To compound this, Rhodesians feel deserted by the Free World. They are fighting forces trained and supplied by the communist bloc but they themselves receive no outside support. For their part, Rhodesians have reason to be devoid of hope; they fight an avalanche of aggression that, no matter how much damage it sustains, it always gains reinforcements and comes back again. For such a people, motivational

factors other than a warrior heritage are required.

When a man accepts his personal fate and places his system of values in higher regard than this fate, then he crosses over to the realm of the warrior. What kind of values are in the minds of a Nathan Hale who had only one life to give, or a John Paul Jones who stood on a sinking ship and claimed he had not yet begun to fight? The values Rooster Cogburn had in mind when he placed the reins in his teeth and spurred forward are laughed off, for Cogburn existed only in a writer's mind. Yet is there a difference in that writer's implied values and those of the men who marched forward with Lee in 1865 or the men who sang with Wilson in 1893?

Perhaps the values themselves change. What values did Bucher have in mind when he struck the colors of the Pueblo in 1968? Even if the values do change, however, it is obvious that Bucher placed his fate in higher regard than his values. It is easy to find fault with Bucher, he was confronted only once. It is a bit more difficult to find fault with a Rhodesian who continually has to make new decisions to leave a peaceful, secure area and go to an operational one. In the absence of other factors, a warrior heritage cannot steel his soul forever.

Is the 12th hour at hand? Perhaps Rhodesians can

yet stem the tide. Rhodesia's innovation in preserving its economy under extreme stress is quite remarkable. Their self-sufficiency drive and handling of money is certainly a step above what others in the same position (such as the South in the War Between the States) have done. Armored vehicles such as the Tusker and Kudu are produced with minimum economic impact yet they are excellent for the job and conditions at hand. Though not direct descendants of the wagonette of 1896, they are at least products of the same thought process. Something of the warrior heritage still lives. Judges 1:19 ends "...they occupied the hill country but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, for they had chariots of iron."<sup>1</sup> Perhaps for the Rhodesians that will also prove true.

## CHAPTER VIII

### Endnotes

1. The Holy Bible, King James Version, Judges, I:19.

## EPILOGUE

### "GONE TO GRAVEYARDS EVERYONE..."

In the months since the research was conducted and this paper was written much has happened. The "Iron Maiden," Margaret Thatcher, was elected Prime Minister of Great Britain and Rhodesians were sure that the hour of deliverance was at hand. Help never arrived; Britain never kept her promises. Rhodesia had to abandon its elections of April 1979 and compromise still further. Americans conveniently failed to remember the Kissinger Accords and sat idly by.

Robert Mugabe, the lifelong violent Marxist, is now the Prime Minister of Rhodesia. His long-term threats to hang Ian Smith, kill all whites and "redistribute" all wealth are no longer heard by the free world.<sup>1</sup> His current activities in confiscation of all firearms and infiltration of the government infrastructure with Marxists are not seen. His ideas for "economic amalgamation" with Mozambique are not known. Instead, Mugabe's pronouncements about happy industrialized society and white security are plastered on the front pages of Western newspapers. Uncle Sam and the British Lion are scratching each other in glee over their

"diplomatic victory."

Does anyone remember the great ticker tape parade Americans gave their "nuevo amigo," Fidel Castro, in April 1960? Has anyone seen a leopard change spots? It won't be long before the cheers will turn to tears. Rhodesian soil will soak up the blood of the dying again. Only the dead have seen the end of this war. It will continue, and one day, be it next year or next decade, the war will move south. The shipping routes between South Africa and Antarctica will be the prize. Whether that war will be a sub-unit of a larger war or whether America will still need the oil that traverses these shipping lanes is a good question.

## EPILOGUE

### Endnotes

1. Gordon Leak, "Ian Smith and his cronies will hang: Interview with Robert Mugabe," Scope, Vol. 13 #43 (27 Oct. 1978), Republican Press, Durban, pp. 32-37.

APPENDIX 1  
PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Afrikaner (Aahf-Ri-Kah-Ner) South African of Dutch or German descent.

Assegai (Ass-A-Guy) Native spear in two versions, one for throwing and one for stabbing.

Bechuanaland (Beck-Ooh-Aah-Nah-Land) A country.

Beira (Bye-Ra) A city.

Iklwa (Eee-Kwah, as close as the western tongue will get) A stabbing assegai.

Imbembesi (Im-Bem-Bee-Zee) A river.

Impi (Im-Pee) A Ndebele regiment or battle group of regiments.

Indaba (In-Dah-Bah) A conference.

Induna (In-Do-Nah) Ndebele regimental or combat leader.

Kopke (Copy) Rock hill.

Kraal (Crawl) An enclosure for cattle or people.

Laager (Lah-grrr) South African equivalent of "circle wagons."

Lobengula (Low-Ben-Goo-La) A person.

Maholi (May-Holy) Ndebele slang term.

Malawi (Muh-Lau-Eee) A country.

Malindidzimu (Mal-In-Did-Zi-Moo) A granite hill in the Matopo Hills.

Mashona (Muh-Shohn-Ah) A tribe.

Matopo (Muh-Toe-Po)  
Mazoe (May-Zoh-Eee) A valley.  
'Mlimo (Um-Mlee-Mo) A god.  
Mugabe (Moo-Gah-Bee) A person.  
Muzorewa (Moo-Zo-Ray-Wah) A person.  
Mzilikazi (Umm-Zill-Ah-Kah-Zee) A person.  
Ndebele (Nah-Bee-Lee) A tribe.  
Nyasaland (Nye-Ass-A-Land) A country.  
Raaff (Raff) A person.  
Selous (Sah-Lew) A person.  
Shaka (Shock-Ah) A person.  
Shangani (Shahn-Gah-Knee) A river.  
Sithole (See-Toe-Lee) A person.  
Voortrekkers (Voor-Trekkers) Boers who participated  
on the migratory trek from Cape Colony to the  
Orange Free State and the Transvaal.

APPENDIX 2  
RHYTHM AND WAR CHANTS

If one were to say that blacks have rhythm the statement would be regarded, and perhaps properly so, as a mortal, racial insult. Yet, when a westerner travels the African bush he sees that there is a reason behind the crude statement on rhythm. Blacks in Africa have not had the industrial base or the labor-saving devices to which westerners are accustomed. Most things are done through joint human effort. By natural processes the blacks in Africa have developed the use of music and chants to organize and coordinate this effort.

On one occasion two whites and four blacks beached a twenty-three foot motor launch on the shore of Lake Kariba. The need existed to get the launch farther up on the beach with the only available means being manpower. One white sat out, saying he could not get in step with the blacks, while the other white seized a rope and dug in his heels for a maximum effort pull. Arranging themselves two to a side, the blacks took hold of the launch and commenced a sing-song chant. They began to "stroke" the launch, adjusted their rhythm a bit, and

the launch slowly advanced on to the shore. After a series of mighty and unsuccessful heaves, the white slipped and fell on his rump, contributing absolutely nothing to the process of beaching the launch.<sup>1</sup>

This incident perfectly illustrates the point that is plain for all to see and that can be seen every day, everywhere in Africa. Through the use of music, the blacks in Africa get their efforts timed and perfectly coordinated, thereby accomplishing feats that a westerner, using less efficient methods, would require more total energy to do. Such an affinity for music, which nature has bred in them as a partial substitute for labor-saving devices, carries over into all facets of a black African's life. For example, upon completion of a successful hunt for major game animals, such as lion and elephant, they have a series of chants and songs of celebration that go on for periods of up to an hour.

All of this music is quite well harmonized and a delight for the western ear. At the same time, it takes little imagination to picture how horrifying the effect must be if the chants and songs came from the throats of four thousand men closing in for a kill. The morale effect on the victims must be close to paralyzation unless they actively resist. A warrior, when confronted with this, would shout back at every opportunity.

Westerners would almost certainly sing. Major Wilson and his men surely shouted their defiance to the hordes of Ndebeles who gathered for the kill.

Further, in slaying warm-blooded mammals, there is a random effect which occurs when using weapons more powerful than really required, such as a .450/.577 Martini-Henry on men. Some percentage of those hit, due in part to shock to the nervous system, flail about in the air and flop convincingly upon the ground. Such kills are quite impressive and can go far towards raising the shooter's morale. Certainly Wilson's men met these sorts of kills with a cheer of victory such as Hip Hip Hooray.<sup>2</sup>

Singing and cheering in the face of certain death seems alien to the "civilized" mind. Such conduct seems to be beyond reality. However, the heat of battle does certain things, especially to those who cross over the boundary to become warriors. The cauldron of war boils things down to the lowest common denominator. Singing at a vocal enemy who continually uses music himself, and cheering when convincing kills are made, is not quite so strange as it appears.

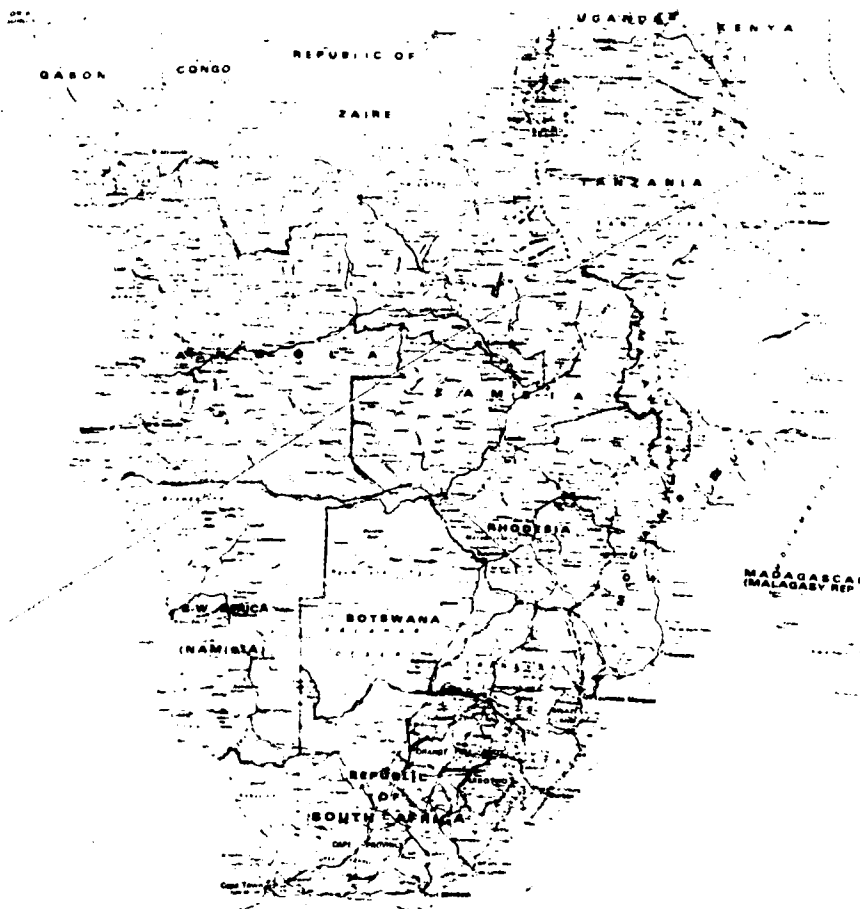
## APPENDIX 2

### Endnotes

1. Observation of the author, 6 July 1979, near Binga, on Lake Kariba, Rhodesia.
2. Observation of 300 some-odd assorted kills made or witnessed by the author during the period 1963-1980. Approximately ten percent exhibit the characteristics of a "convincing" kill.

**APPENDIX 3**

**FIGURES**



### 1. Map

Natal is located on the southeastern coast of Africa just north of Durban. The Drakensburg Mountains lie to the north west of Natal, between it and the Transvaal. Rhodesia lies to the north of the Transvaal, the border being the Limpopo River.



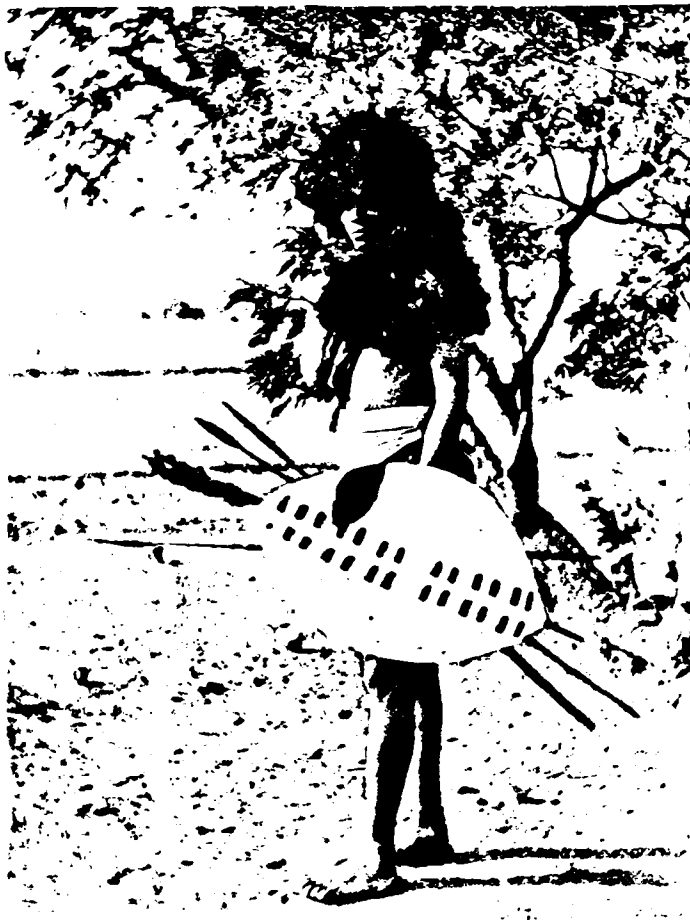
## 2. Ndebele

He is armed with a battle ax, two throwing assegais and a stabbing assegai which is held centrally in the left hand.



### 3. Ndebele

He is armed with a knobkerrie (club) and four assegais. The stabbing assegai is reversed.



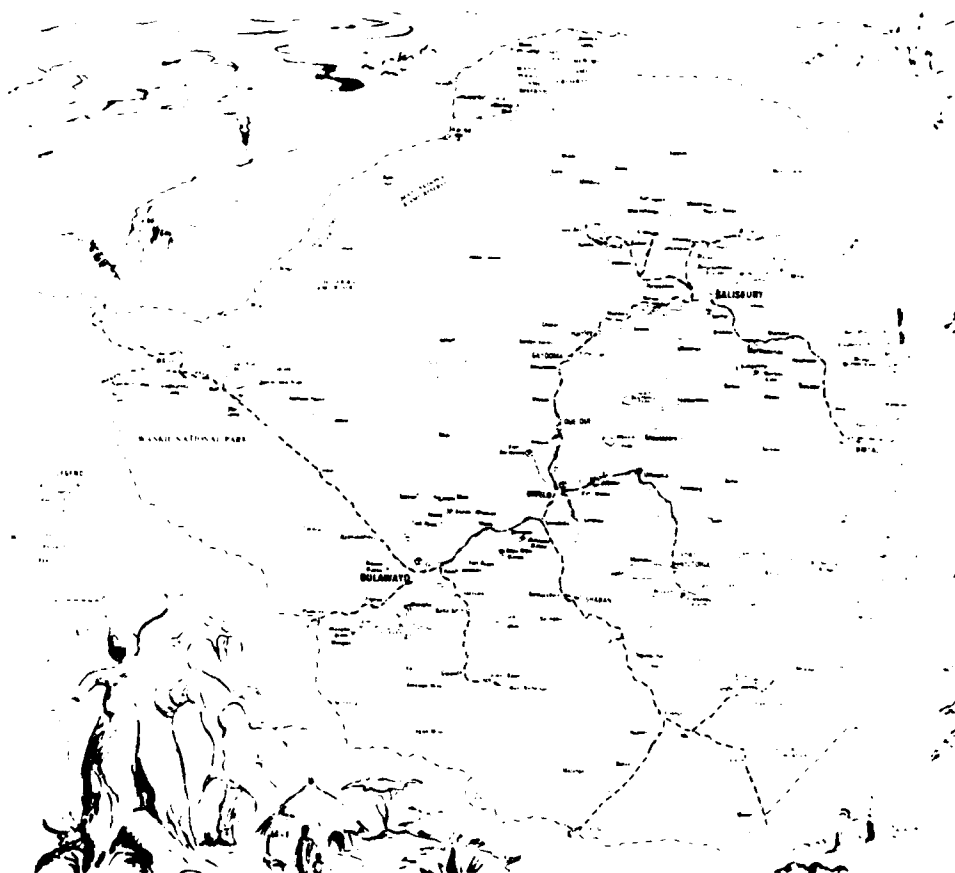
4. Ndebele

Note that he is barefoot.



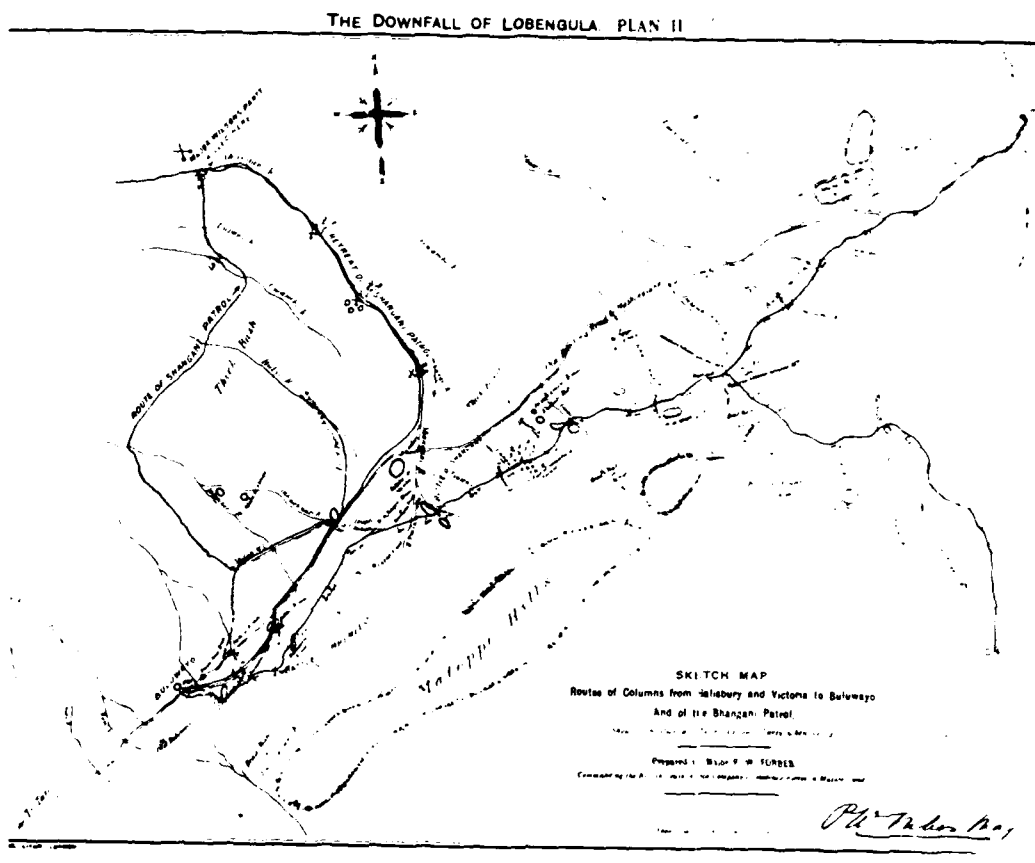
#### 5. Martini-Henry Rifles

Photograph of two Martini-Henry rifles in the Midlands Museum, Gwelo. The forward one has been "sporterized" from the military version by cutting excess wood from the stock. These rifles were chambered for the .450/.577, which was a .577 case necked down to .450 with no other change. In operation, the finger lever behind the trigger guard was swung down, thereby dropping the breechblock within the action and exposing the breech.



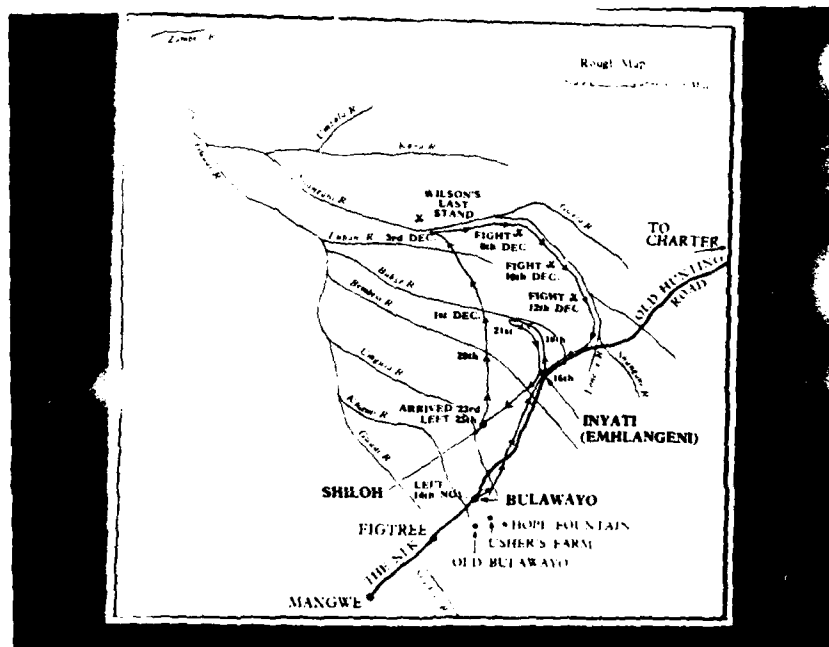
## 6. Rhodesia

Fort Matlaputla is west of Tuli which itself is located along the southern border of Rhodesia. The "boundary" between Matabeleland and Mashonaland starts in the game reserve on the south east of Rhodesia. It runs roughly northwestward to Gwelo lying between the railroad and Fort Victoria. From Gwelo the boundary lies close to a line due north to Gatoona and thence to Copper Queen and Kariba.



### 7. Sketch Map

This sketch map by Major Forbes shows the path of the Fort Victoria and Salisbury Columns (dark lines), the link up at Iron Mine Hill, and the location of the two battles fought en route to Bulawayo. The Matopo Hills are incorrectly spelled and located on this map.



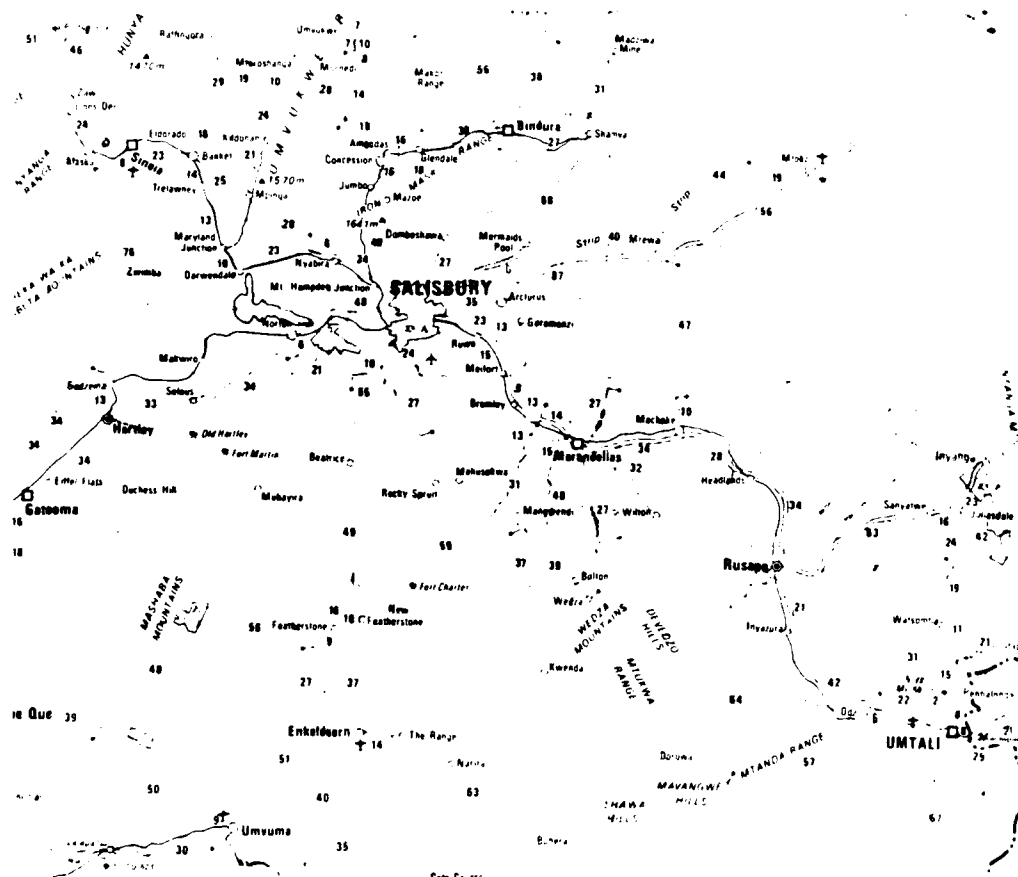
#### 8. Map of the Route of the Mobile Column

Note the meandering route of the "mobile column" from Bulawayo to Inyati to Shiloh. At Shiloh and at points north the column was reduced in size.



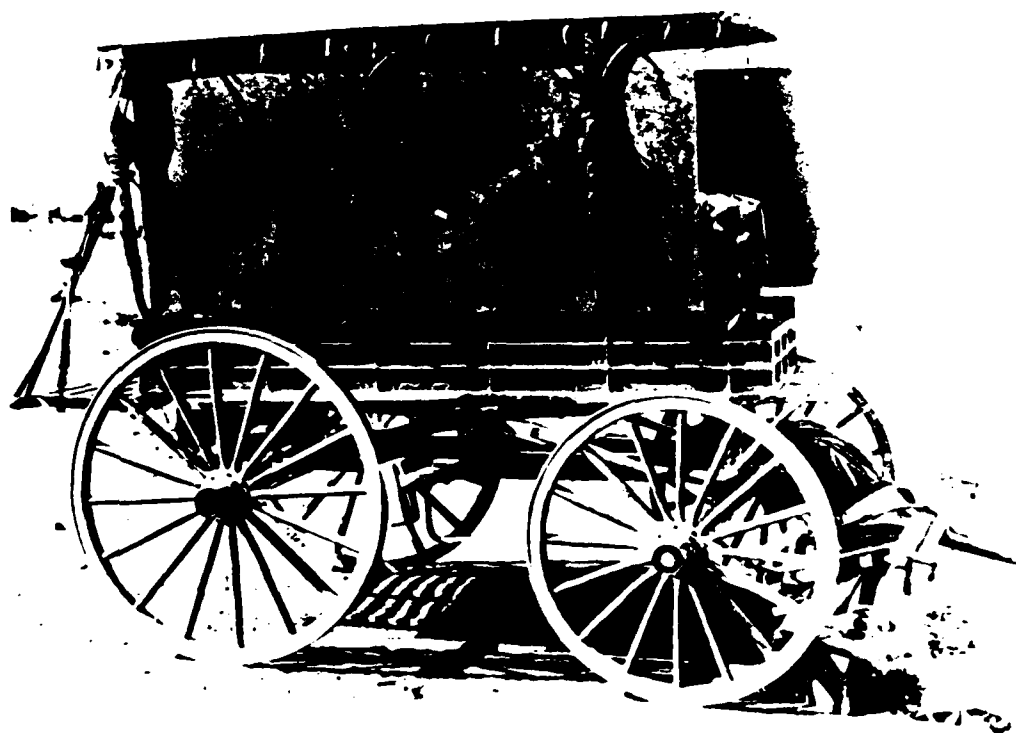
9. Norton's Farm

A relief patrol inspecting the remains of Norton's Farm, located south of Salisbury. Note the two men are armed with Lee-*Metfords*, not *Martini-Henry's*.



### 10. Salisbury and vicinity

Mazoe lies in the Iron Mask Range north west of Salisbury. The supply route from Beira followed the current road from Umtali (south east) to Salisbury.

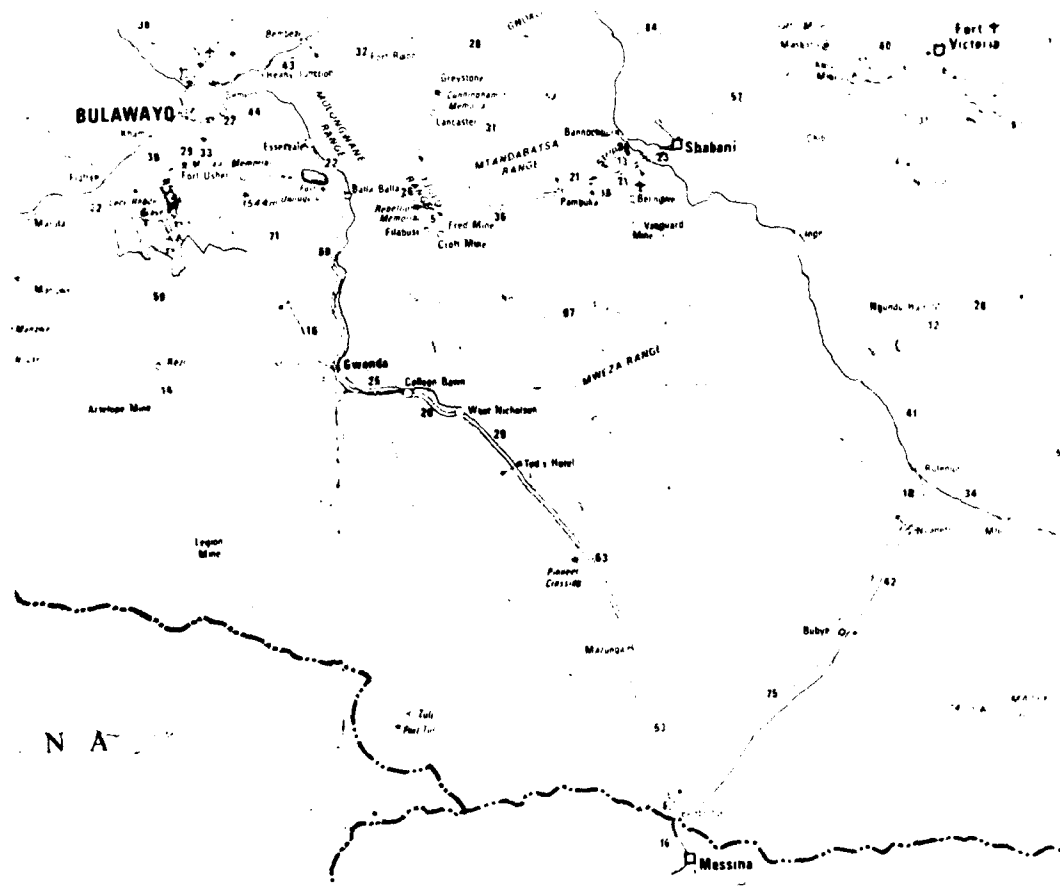


11. Mazoe Wagonette



#### 12. Mazoe Patrol

Patrol members gathered about the wagonette. Pascoe is on top, Captain Nesbitt is on the extreme left, second row. Note that with the exception of two Lee-Metfords (front row, second from left and extreme right) and one shotgun (front row, second from right) the Patrol is armed with Martini-Henry's.



13. Map

Bulawayo and the Matopo Hills



14. Earthwork Fort



15. Fort Figtree

Note this fort is simply a kopje with defensive improvements.



16. Brand's Fort

Note the seven pounder gun.



17. A large kopje



18. A field force firing at a kopje with a seven pounder.



19. Citizenry

From left to right these people are armed with: a Martini-Henry, a Martini-Henry, a double barreled shotgun and a percussion pistol, an 8 gauge Paradox (combination rifle-shotgun), an assegai, an 1886 Winchester, and an 8 gauge Paradox. The last man also has a revolver of some sort in addition to the Paradox as he has revolver cartridges on his belt.



## 20. Terrorism

Woman with upper lip cut off by black terrorists.  
Lip mutilation is a bit uncommon, normally the ears  
, nose are cut off also.



### 21. Terrorism

Village headman bound and bayoneted by terrorists.



## 22. Terrorism

Villager bound, slain and bayoneted by terrorists.  
Lack of blood in the bayonet wounds indicates the victim  
was dead when the terrorists began to bayonet him.



23. Site of Allen Wilson's Last Stand



24. Wilson Monument

Note the granite of the Matopo Hills in the background. The author, with M1A battle rifle, stands before the Monument. Photograph by automatic timer, the area surrounding the Monument is devoid of human life.



25. Relief on Wilson Monument



26. Allan Stewart's Painting

Note the gold curtains and frame, title plaque and diffused light.



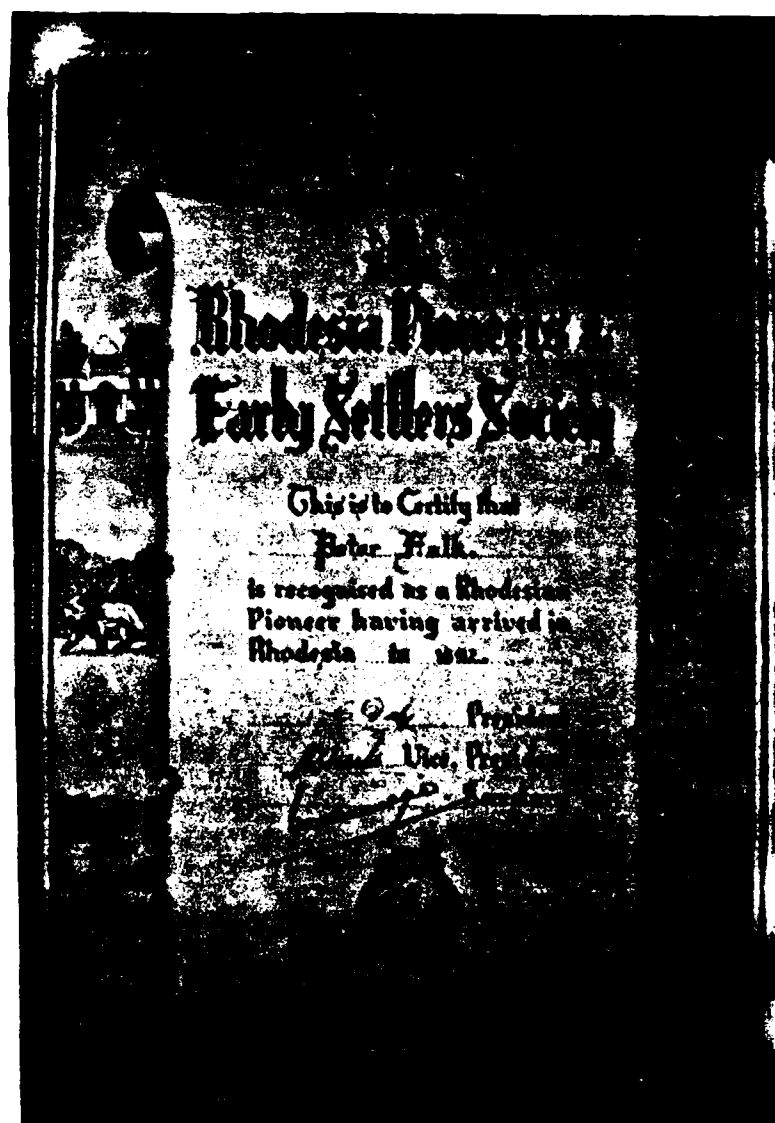
27. Allan Stewart's Painting

Detail showing slain horses and the general arrangement of the defense.



28. Allan Stewart's Painting

Detail showing Major Allan Wilson (central standing figure) and the Martini-Henry rifles.



## 29. Certificate

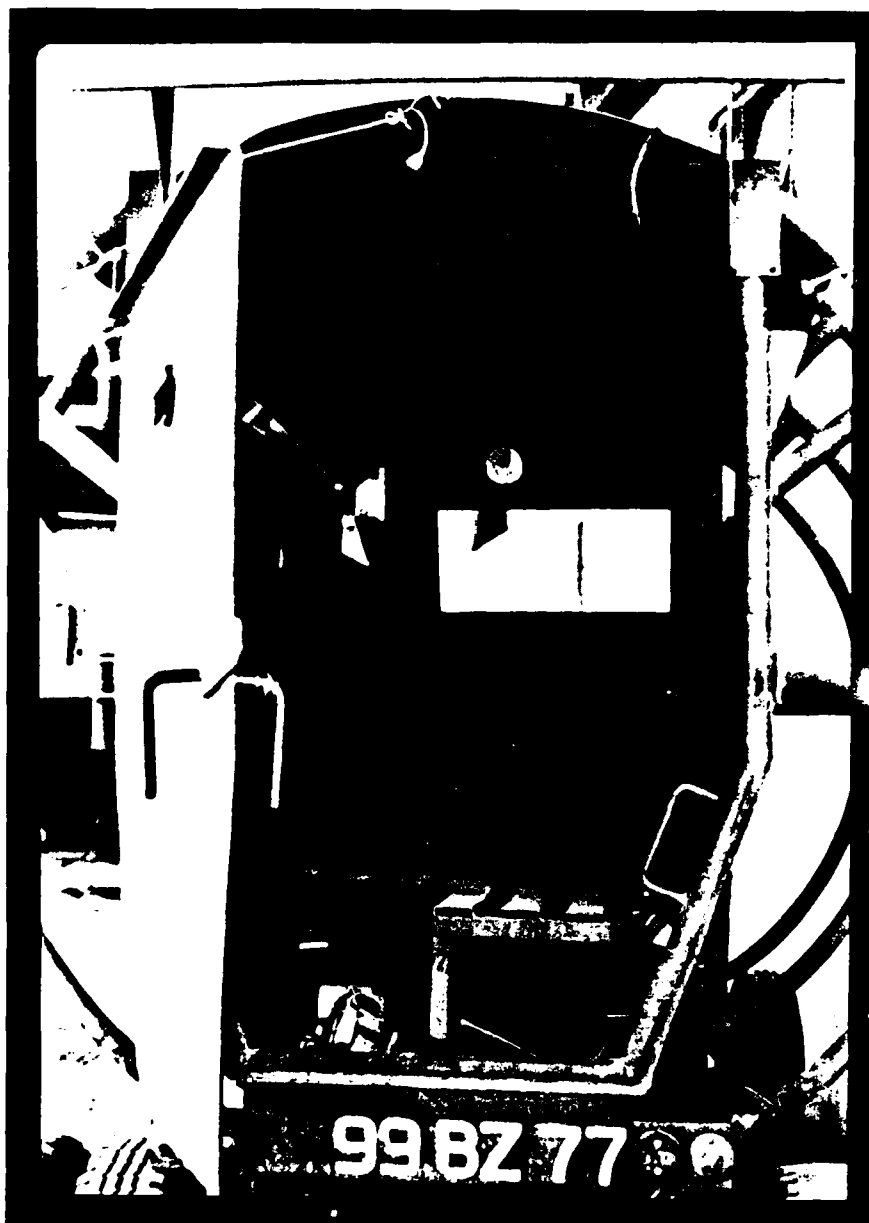
Rhodesia Pioneers and Early Settlers Society  
 certificate indicating the status of one Peter Falk.  
 From the Midlands Museum, Gwelo.



30. Leopard



31. Rhino



32. Rhino Interior



33. Tusker

AD-A084 916

ARMY MILITARY PERSONNEL CENTER ALEXANDRIA VA  
THE WARRIOR HERITAGE. A STUDY OF RHODESIA. (U)  
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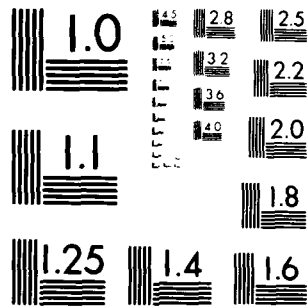
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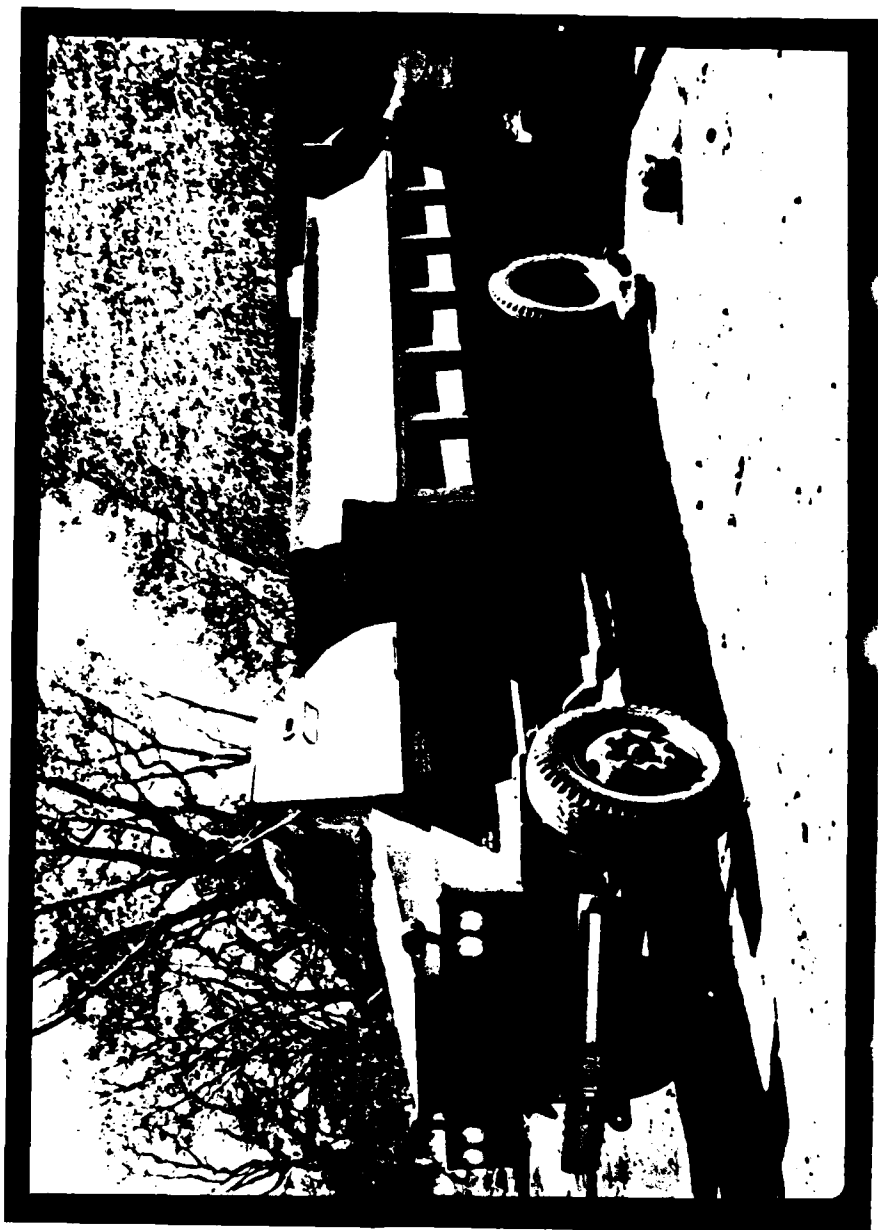
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MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART  
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34. Puma



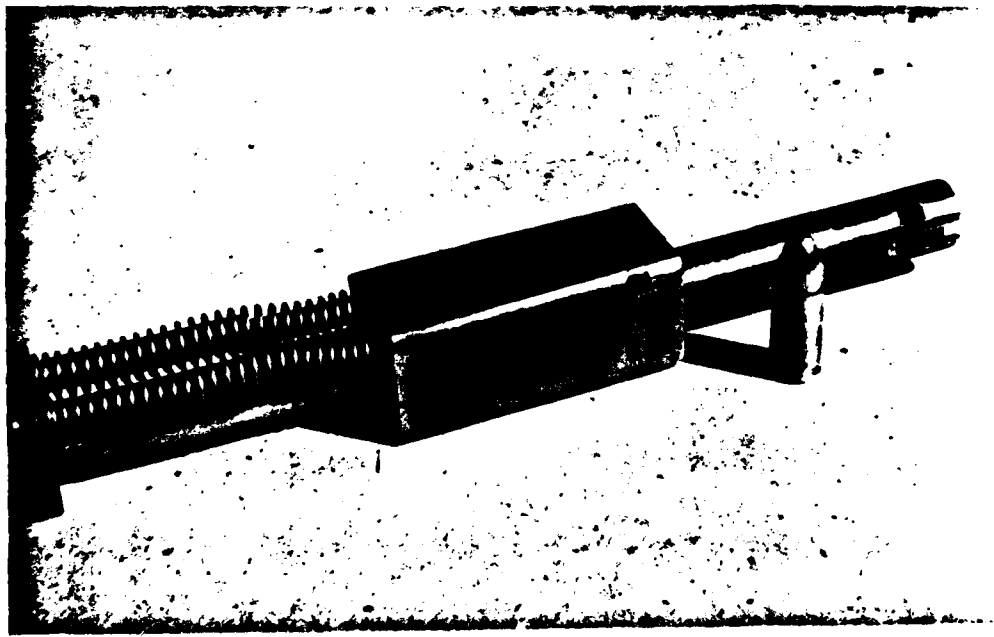
35. Hippo

Canvas top has been removed.



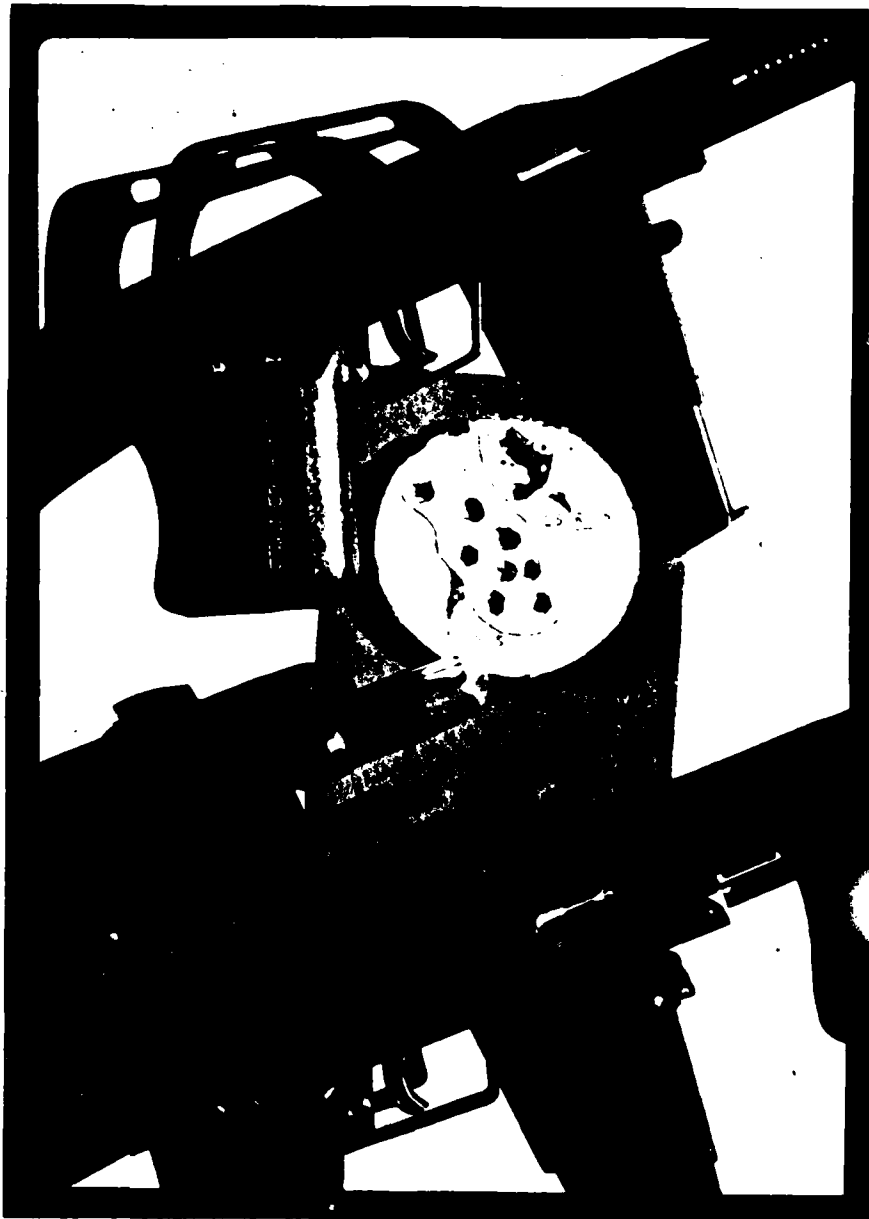
36. Land Rover

Note the roll bars, plates under the cab and tumble screens.



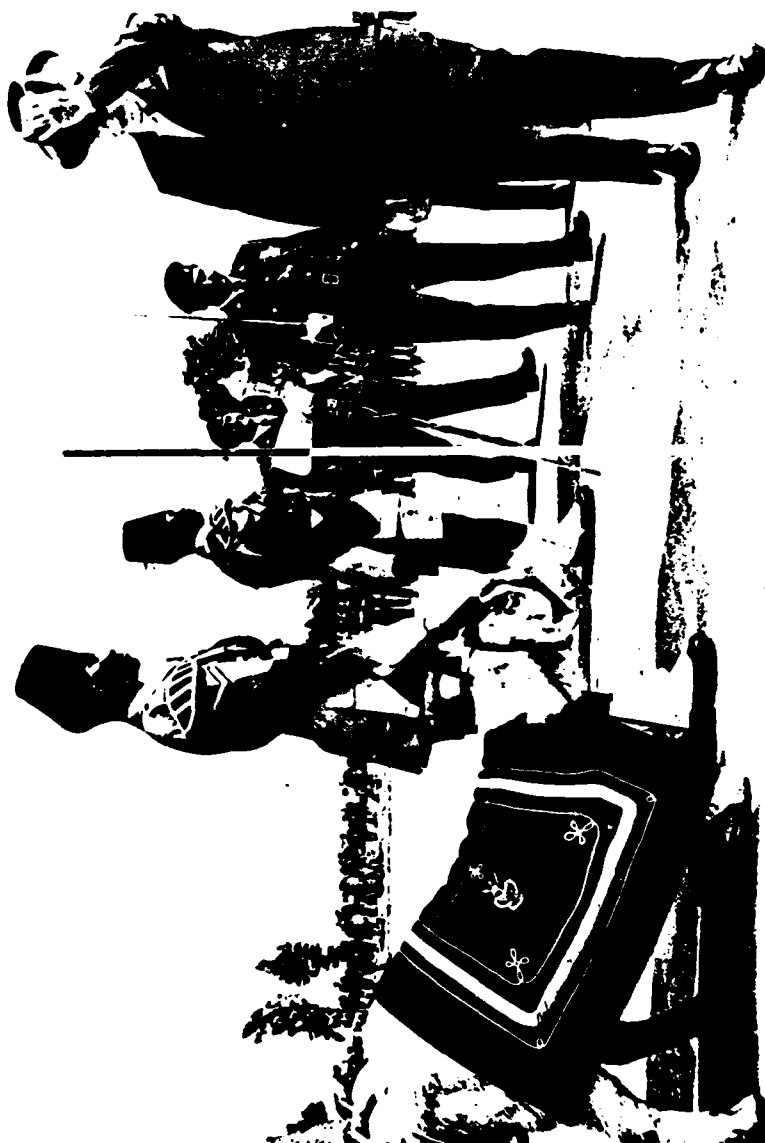
37. Bolt from TS III

Note the springs, rubber buffer plate at the rear and slot for the extractor (not mounted). The cartridge shown is 9mm Parabellum.



38. Two TS III's

The smaller group was fired without the Quick Point night sight mounted on the lower weapon.



### 39. Regimental Traditions

The mascot of the 1st Battalion, Rhodesian African Rifles, salutes Prime Minister Ian Smith.



#### 40. Grey's Scouts

A trooper of Grey's Scouts at the charge with an FN-FAL automatic rifle.

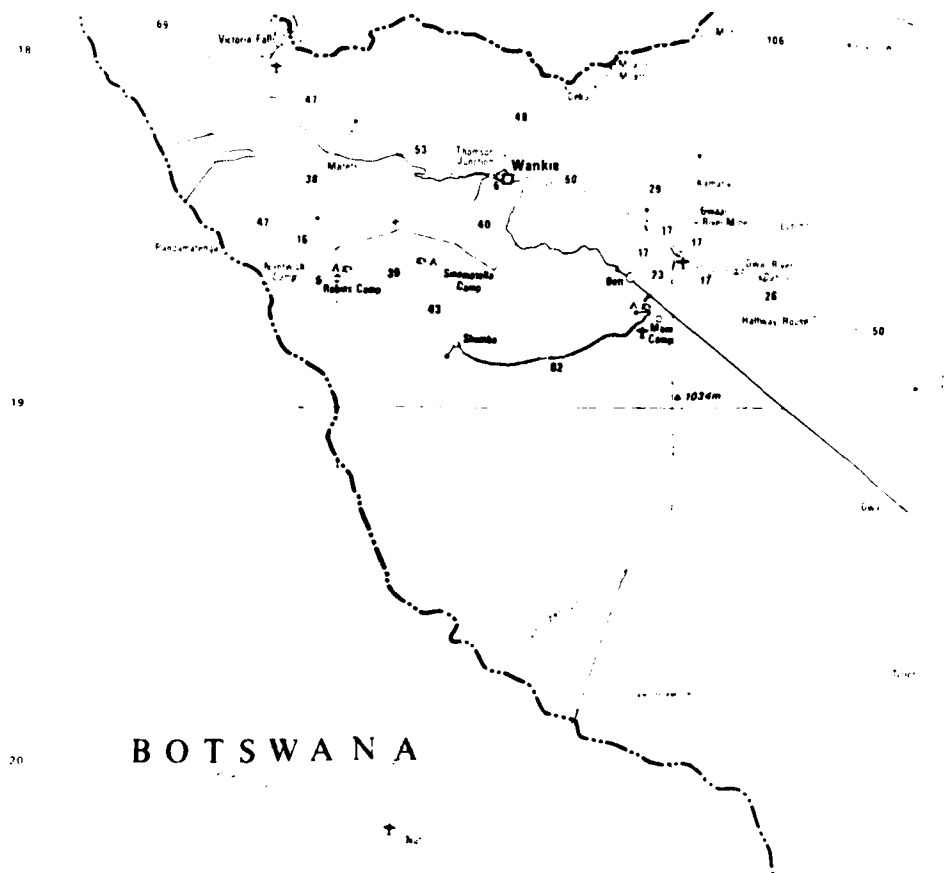


#### 41. BSAP

Photograph of BSAP patrol in a village. Strangely enough, they look like soldiers. Ad copy for the BSAP reads:

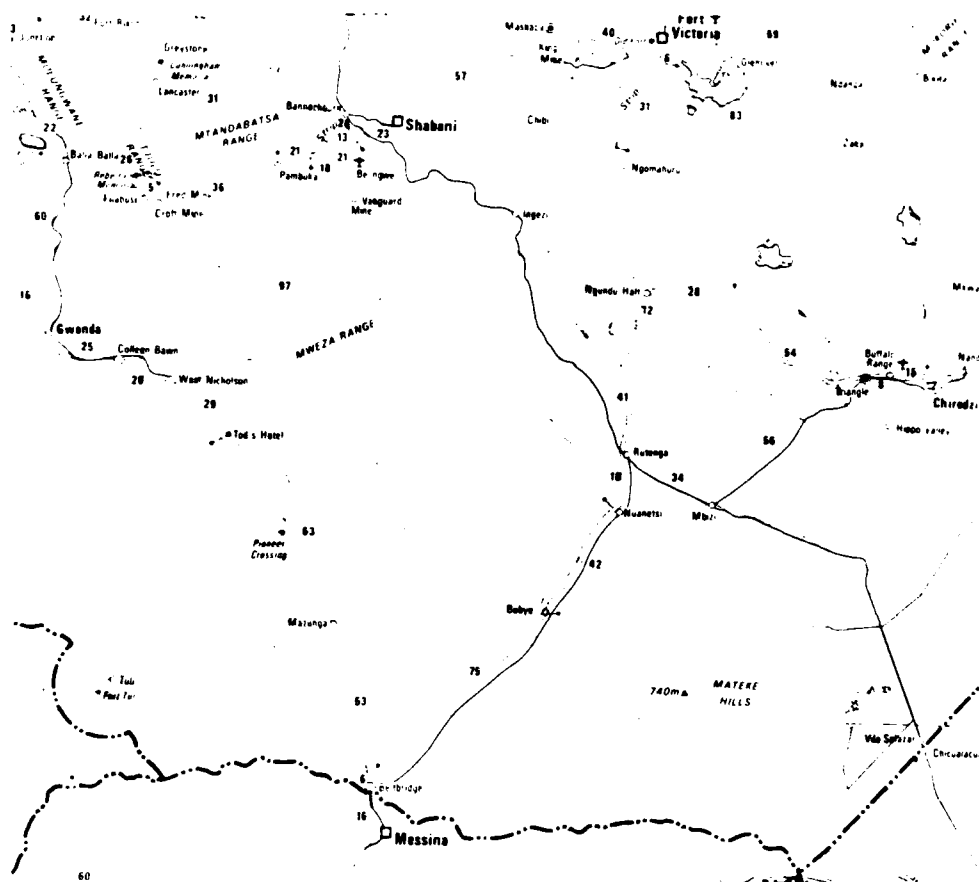
Support Unit in action. A month before, these men, highly trained in bush warfare, could have been investigating a city crime, patrolling an urban beat, or directing traffic.

This may sound fine to the uneducated, but in reality, and in a word, it is rubbish.



#### 42. Matetsi-Wankie Area

Note the dirt road running from Pandamatenga (on the border) through Matetsi (name of area and "town," no one actually lives in the "town") to the 390 peg.



#### 43. West Nicholson Area

Tod's Hotel is located on the road from Bulawayo through Gwanda to Beitbridge. Doddieburn Ranch is a thirty mile square area on the west side of the road and south west of Tod's Hotel.



#### 44. Datsun Machine Gun Truck

This vehicle is an early model and lacks armor protection for the machine gun and gunner.

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Certain clarifications must be made in order to have a full understanding of the bibliography. First, the Archives in Salisbury possess documents that are normally found in a state of disarray. Accession numbers yielded anything from a folder to a shoebox. Contained therein were whatever papers the researcher wanted but there were no inventories or page numbers. As any camper knows, those in the wilderness rapidly lose track of time and normally write on whatever is at hand. Documents in Salisbury reflected this, particularly in the case of diaries, letters and reminiscences. These papers were normally not numbered and at best had a random date every two weeks or so. Passages describing the events of any particular calendar day were run together. Only by comparing a number of letters and diaries side-by-side could one positively identify the day which each particular passage covered. Consequently, the citations given are the best that can be done with what was actually marked on the documents. The Rhodesians apologize for this but, since 1965, they have had no funds and no materials to do anything better. As Mr. Shepherd, head of the Records Section, put it,

"Dreadful war and sanctions you know."

Interviews presented another major problem area. First, many Rhodesians manifest a virulent streak of anti-Americanism following failure of the United States to abide by the Kissinger Accords. Rhodesians feel betrayed and bitterly resentful. Secondly, sanctions presented an insurmountable barrier. Harold Wilson, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in 1965, instituted an armed naval blockade of the Port of Beira in order to enforce economic sanctions against Rhodesia. Further, Rhodesia was inundated with economic spies who asked innocuous questions about brand names and so forth. This information was then used to trace and stop sanction breakers. In response, the Rhodesian government mounted a security campaign which made the U.S. "loose lips" idea of World War II look positively amateurish. Lastly, Rhodesians feel deserted by the rest of the world in what they regard as a struggle against Communism. As a result, Rhodesians resist interviews. They introduce themselves to strangers by their first name only (if at all) and they are suspicious of questions. Compliments such as a "fine weapon" or a "good car" normally resulted in no answer and in blocking the questioner's view of the object in question. Data plates on "sensitive" items were frequently removed as a precaution against "spies." Production of a

writing instrument or notebook of any sort invariably resulted in stony silence.

Establishing an "interview" rapport generally took a great deal of time and required emphasis of the interviewer's Southern origins and a caricaturing of "damnyankees." The interviewer's attempts to interview members of Army units brought fruit only after expenditure of a great deal of time, effort, and money. This fruit took a number of forms. Some notes were surrendered and destroyed due to random security disclosures. Those items that were not classified and could be positively reconstructed have been used. Some notes, particularly those from the School of Infantry, were cleared and left in the possession of the interviewer. Lastly, in driving to various units and other locations, the interviewer traveled some 6,000 kilometers, unescorted, through operational areas, in a non-mine-proof Datsun sedan. Needless to say, the interviewer went "armed to the teeth" and thereby discovered a useful technique. Willing offers of armed assistance, from open combat to standing guard while some unfortunate made repairs on his vehicle, normally resulted in interesting casual interviews. Though facts, dates and places for such interviews were easy to record eventually, names were not. Such incidents brought about a bond in which names simply

were not used.

Lastly, the interviewer picked up hitch-hikers whenever the opportunity presented itself. His lack of command of the written Sindebele and Mashona languages created problems with some of those people. Discussion of events and items with a smattering of common English words were easily understood. Where place names and other phrases from such interviews could be deciphered by use of a map or dictionary, the interview was later recorded. Personal names rarely survived, even when attempts at phonetic spelling were made.

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